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March/April 2008



ON THE COVER: Chucky. Showcase a latest merchandise masterpiece!

THIS ISSUE: Toys, toys, toys! In celebration of the 20th anniversary of the scariest "killer doll" movie ever made, HorrorHound presents a very intense retrospective article, featuring interviews with the cast and crew from all five Chucky films - as well as the most insane collection of merchandise images ever presented in one place! If you're a fan of Charles Lee Ray - this issue is for you! On top of this, HorrorHound's own Aaron Crowell has set-out to dissect the history of animated dolls in horror. The films that set the stage for the later-terrors of Chucky - including key television shows ranging from *Twilight Zone* and *Tales from the Darkside* to *Tales from the Crypt* and *Friday the 13th: The Series*. This is the most complete essay on the subject printed to date!

Toy Fair takes place mid-February in New York City, and with it comes a ton of new announcements. Check out page 20 for a peek at some of the exciting new horror toys due in stores by year's end! As if this spotlight wasn't enough - we sit down with Amok Time's own Paul James Lazo to discuss the company's recent revelation of horror product, and what we can expect in the future from this new burgeoning Artist spotlight returns this issue with a look at yet another unsung hero from the action figure and model-making industry: Ray Sanolero. We talk with Ray about his past work, and how he managed to fall into this trade as he reveals some of the lesser-known secrets behind the arduous toy industry!

Over a year in the making - HorrorHound presents a special editorial on the current status of independent DVD-producers and studios within the industry. With the consistent closings of retail and rental chains across the US, it is making it exceedingly difficult with each passing day to release new product that doesn't feature a Sony or Warner Brothers logo attached to it. Who will fans turn to, to rerelease classic and forgotten titles if these companies disappear?

New movies highlighted this issue includes *Rape: The Genetic Opera*, *Mother of Tears* and more! All this, plus our regular-feature articles, including *Horror's Hallowed Grounds*, *Prince of Darkness*, *Serious Killer* (featuring Jack the Ripper), *GoreHound: Fulci's 20 Greatest Gore Moments*, comic book and DVD news, plus a special fans-choice *HorrorHound Hall of Fame* featuring *Fright Night*!

MOVIE NEWS:

Rape, Funny Games, Hard-Held Horror, Best of '07, etc.



DVD NEWS:

Featuring Them, 30 Days of Night, April Fools Day, etc.



TOY NEWS:

Day of the Dead, 30 Days of Night, Trick 'r Treat, etc.



CHILD'S PLAY:

A HorrorHound Retrospective



Artist Spotlight:

Ray Sanolero



Serial Killers:

JACK THE RIPPER



GOREHOUND:

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NEXT ISSUE:

Horror Convention Calendar!



2007 Fan Voting, 10 Random Q's, Mick Garris!



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LETTERS

This issue is dedicated to the memory of Maki Numi (Vamang).

Hollywood has been at a crossroads as the ancient strike continues, a number of other potential strikes also threatened (actors are next up, with the directors recently "biking" a new contract agreement). It may take some time [mid-to-end of 2009] to be eased before this crunch on the industry is fully felt, but I just wanted to take a moment to think about all the exciting new films due for release in 2009! Some of the exciting titles to look forward to include *Thick & Thin*, *Frontier(s)*, *Treasure Trove*, *Doomsday Without*, *Midnight Meat Train*, *Rico: The Genetic Opera*, *All the Boys Love Mandy Lane* and *Where the Wild Things Are*.

Like sequel? How does *Underworld 3*, *The Mummy 4*, *Grudge 3*, *Lost Boys 2*, *Cabin Fever 2*, *Heavenly 2* and *Saw 5* sound? And don't think you're safe from the mistakes either as they pop onto screens this year in spades! We already reviewed *One Man Galt* and *The Eye* but don't forget about *Funny Games*, *Hellraiser*, *Shutter*, *Near Dark*, *From Night*, *Death Race*, *April Fools Day*, *Stepfather*, *Don't Look Now*, *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, *Scanners* and *Motel Hell*!

Nathan Henneman
Editor-in-Chief, HornHound

I am a new reader of your magazine, and I absolutely love it. I would love to have my tattoo in your mag (shown at right), and I love the other reader's tats! Any chance of going monthly?

Stacey Ritz

Hey Stacey! Thanks for the pic (see right)! We announced last issue that we are now officially bi-monthly! That's a big step up from quarterly. Monthly is our goal, and with continued support from our fans - we will get there!

Wow! Thanks for the write-up on *One Missed Call*! I think what makes this movie so scary is that people are afraid of prank calls that can be somewhat threatening. I remember getting a call from some strange guy, that was saying he knew who I was, where I lived and that he was going to kill me. When I saw *One Missed Call* it kind of gave me the chills. I think this movie is going to scare the dickens out of me. I recently saw Stephen King's *The Mist* and *Am Legend*, both are outstanding horror movies! Horror movies are getting better and better!

Paul Dale Roberts
Paranormal Investigator

I just wanted to commend you on another great issue of *HorrorsAlike*. What makes the magazine so enjoyable for a collector like myself is the coverage of all the products that coincide with the movies you are covering. It's cool to see the use promo items that I haven't laid eyes on in years or better yet discovering something new to try and track down. Also, kudos for such extensive coverage on *Halloween IV*, which I personally find to be the best *Halloween* film after the original, and doesn't receive enough love.

Nick Lombardo

I recently attended Screamfest '07 in Orlando, Florida. I had a KILLER good time! I can't wait for next year's show. When I found out that there was a horror-movie magazine published in my hometown of Milford, Ohio, I flipped my wig! You guys (and gals) have got a dope magazine and I support it 100%! I'd give my left

nal to make it to your up-coming Indianapolis, Indiana show. You should bring Hornhound Weekend to Florida!

PS These horror movies kick ass. *Company of Wolves*
Suspect (1, 2 & 3) and *Medusa*!
 Thom MacLeod

I began watching horror movies as a very young age. There are always those key moments in horror films that makes you want to re-watch it over and over again, such as watching Clint Howard squish a man's head with a waffle iron in the *Crow*. After watching Edward Pong play an all-out realistic video game in *Brainiac*, or a man-eating-hairball chasing people around town in *Critters*. That's right, killer hairballs from outer space attacking people in the small town of "Grover's Bend." All four of the *Critters* movies have become a lifelong favorite to me, and this tattoo [shown below] shall forever keep those memories visible to me. I hope that one day those cute, vicious hairballs shall feed again.

Christopher Lacks

Dear *Horrorhound*, First of all I would like to say how much I love your magazine. I was thrilled to find out that your magazine is now going to be based [out issue]. I am also proud that this terrific [ish in my home state of Ohio. I thoroughly [st issue dedicated to the Melrose films. It was [ame love shown to Chae Barker's lesser known. I too long for the day when a director's out of that [st.

I equally enjoyed your list of the top "non-horror" horror films. It was a treat to see *Legend* included on your list. Whenever I mention liking the film *Legend*, I am either teased or get blank stares. Either way, no one can deny that Tim Curry plays one of the greatest villains ever.

Finally, I'd like to nominate a film for your Horrornouned Hall of Fame, *Exorcist 3: Legion*. I feel this movie is very underrated and has one of the scariest scenes in a horror film ever: (the nurse hallway scene). It could be because I saw this movie when I was ten in the theater. It could be because every time I go to visit my grandpa at the nursing home I keep expecting to see elderly people with giant shears crawling on the ceiling. Who knows? All I know is I feel it deserves a place in the Hall of Fame.

Arnette Gregg

Below Artist Dave Neidler contributed this piece to HorrorHound magazine. It is his first horror piece.



HORROR HOUND

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Let's Play it Again: FUNNY GAMES by Jessica Dwyer



In the 1990s, filmmakers were starting to become more and more desensitized to the violence shown on their movie screens. More and more films were starting to push limits, glamorizing what was once thought of as horrific. We were going along with the serial killers, and laughing as they slashed people to bits and pieces. Freddy and company were more like old friends, and we had a new director on the horizon in the States that was going to take the crime/action film to a whole new level by the name of Quentin Tarantino. Violence was cool and

camera and talks to the audience. At other points, he makes comments as though he knows they are part of a film, one line stating that the reason he hasn't killed the family is that they haven't reached feature length yet (this happens at the 90 minute mark.) It's an ingenious way to make the viewer feel all the more disturbed by what they are watching. The two tormentors have a conversation that, as they are asking each other a question, they also ask the audience: even if something is a fiction that's witnessed by someone, does that mean it didn't really happen? That sort of self-aware behavior by two fictional characters makes you, as a viewer, take pause. What are we really watching when we see something played out across a screen? Is the psychological impact lessened any by knowing that it was just make believe? These are the questions that Haneke asks, and you need to find the answers for yourself.

beautiful to look at. Enter a writer/director who wanted to show that violence wasn't the beautiful creature we had become accustomed to: Michael Haneke. German born Haneke delivered a movie that was brutal and ugly, and left a bad taste in your mouth after watching it. The film was called *Funny Games*.

Released in 1997, *Funny Games* tells the story of a well to do German family on holiday; a mother, father, and son. Whilst settling into their lakeside house two young men, who were visiting their neighbors, show up and everything goes downhill from there. The two young men are psychopaths who are pros at terrorizing people, and have set their sights on the vacationing family. Over the course of the night they make a bet with the victims that none of their unwilling hosts will make it out alive. What follows is a sick and twisted nightmare for the family, as they are forced to play the psychopath's evil games.

Funny Games is almost a surrealistic film. The cinematography is strangely bright in the beginning, and as the film moves along, it gains a darker quality. There's no score or music, other than some opera in the beginning, and a screaming metal track that shows up at a few key moments. Haneke also has his lead villain turn to the camera and speak to the audience (sic: *Richard the Third*) which is unexpected, but this helps convey the message he's trying to get across. When you watch something like this...you're an accomplice, like it or not. Other



Flash forward ten years later, and Haneke is retelling the film for American audiences. This time around we have, ironically, Tarantino favorite Tim Roth (*Reservoir Dogs*) as George, the father. Naomi Watts (*The Ring*) as the mother, Anna, and child-actor Devon Gearhart as young George, their son. Brady Corbet and Michael Pitt (who was also played one of the killers in *Murder by Numbers*) round out the main cast as Peter and Paul, the two deranged youths who terrorize the family.

Haneke's new vision isn't that new. In fact, he went to great lengths to copy his first version of *Funny Games*. The sets were constructed using the original film's blueprints, and the same car is driven by the family on their way to the lake. The film's message is even more relevant today, and even more eerie, with the numbers of teenage-related violent crimes rising across America. Haneke's vision is often compared to *A Clockwork Orange* in terms of its story of violence by an uncaring and unemotional youths. It's a good match, as both films have a stark blinding quality to them. The attacks are squirm-inducing, and leave you feeling as if you are every inch the voyeur. He holds nothing back in terms of the brutality in either version, and he does so without a lot of gore. This is another part of what Haneke does to the viewer that makes the film pull you in, kicking and screaming. Most of the horrific things that happen are done off-screen...with only partial views of their outcomes. As was done in films like *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, it's left to your imagination to fill in the blanks. This bit of psychological trickery causes people to see far worse than what is actually shown.

It's disturbing because of the fact that this is just a random family, and there is no explanation as to why these two normal looking boys would do this. That's where the scare factor comes in, and Haneke's cautionary tale really starts to play rough. You'll leave it with a sick feeling in the pit of your stomach when you realize it's not as farfetched as you first thought. *Funny Games* (US version) was shown at Sundance in January of 2008, and will be released to a limited theatrical run on March 14th. The original 1997 German-language feature film is currently available on DVD.



odd tools are used such as a character's rewinding of the movie, and long scenes that become uncomfortably silent. It's unsettling, eerie and since its release, has become as an interesting piece of cinema by film aficionados.

These themes and techniques combine to really make the viewer think about what he or she is watching, and just what your role is in the grand scheme of things. At times, Haneke's villains say things that cross a barrier into a bizarre self-awareness. As said, Paul the seeming leader of the two boys, turns to the



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Hand-Held Horror

by Jessica Dwyer

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CANNIBAL HOLOCAUST



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Cloverfield has become the first smash hit of 2008, with special thanks to a viral marketing campaign that started well over six months before the film's release, and a trailer that generated more buzz than a bees nest in a wind tunnel. But it wasn't the gimmickery that JJ Abrams and company created to tie-in with the movie that will keep people talking... it's the film itself! Cloverfield is the latest in a group of movies that utilize a story-telling technique that, if done right, can be a terrifying thing to witness in a theater. That tool is the hand-held camera.

"Hand-held" movies can bring a sense of realism to film that

is rarely seen, and bring the viewer along with the story in a way that's more personal than your typical horror films. You're in the middle of what's going on, a point of view that's right next to the person experiencing the terrors and events first hand. Most hand-held films take place under the pretense of a documentary, leaving you the viewer watching this faux presentation. Sometimes it is footage that happened to be recorded by someone witnessing certain events (as in the case of *Cloverfield*), and other times the footage will be part of a regular film. We're going to showcase some of the standouts in this genre of horror, starting with one of the most disturbing and controversial, then ending with the newest entries into the group.

Cannibal Holocaust

Not only is *Cannibal Holocaust* one of the most disturbing of the hand-held movies, it's probably one of the most controversial films of all time. Released in 1980, the feature didn't find its way into the US until 1985. Directed by Ruggero Deodato, the story takes place in the Amazon (where it was actually filmed) as a group of filmmakers dare to brave the green inferno of the "untouched" country to capture, on camera, native tribesmen and record images that have never been caught on film before. The young group knew that no one has ever returned from where they were going, but being fearless (or stupid), they head off into the deepest parts of the rainforest. Two months later, they have disappeared.

A well known anthropologist agrees to travel in hopes of finding them, and recover their film footage. He eventually, after witnessing some of the more brutal of the native's rituals first hand, locates the footage, and discovers the fate of the lost crew. As it turns out, the film crew weren't the innocent darlings everyone thought they were, and the natives didn't take kindly to the measures they took for their "art." Once their tactics are discovered, you the viewer (as well as the anthropologist) are left wondering who the real monsters are.

Cannibal Holocaust falls into the "footage within a film" type of hand-held horror movie. The majority of the hand-held documentary footage is shown at the end of the film, and it is truly horrific to watch. The gritty, yet beautiful, realism that Deodato brings to the screen is chills-inducing and jaw dropping. Italian authorities even believed that this was a snuff film, as the deaths are very realistic.

The film is legendary for the rumors of what happened on-screen and off, with the truth being no stranger than fiction. Real animal deaths were filmed, the most notorious of which is a large turtle, two spider monkeys, and a pig. However, this is really nothing new to the *Cannibal* subgenre of films. There is even footage within

the uncut version of the film that showcases actual firing-squad executions. And that is just on-screen! After the film was shot, Deodato was brought-up on charges as it was thought that he had actually killed the actors on-camera. He was forced to produce the live-actors in court thus proving his innocence. As it was, he and others attached to the film were fined, and received suspended sentences on obscenity charges.

Cannibal Holocaust, the second movie in Deodato's cannibal trilogy, was released just prior to Umberto Lenzi's *Cannibal Ferox* (a film of equal ferocity). The premise of "Holocaust" has been copied many times, but no other film has managed to duplicate the gut wrenching feel and look (let alone controversy) of this classic Deodato cannibal film... which is still banned in quite a few countries. No official sequel has been filmed, however, many movies boast the title of *Cannibal Holocaust 2*.

Ruggero Deodato has since said that he wished he never made the film, regretting his decisions on the animal killings, and the extreme lengths he went to make it, but no one can deny the fact that he succeeded in creating exactly what he was aiming for. *Cannibal Holocaust* sticks with you long after you watch it, and makes you think about just how evolved we truly are. With reality TV and media going the lengths it has to get a story, Deodato's vision of documentary filmmakers staging, and creating horror to help sensationalize their own story foreshadowed a lot of what is going on today, albeit to an extreme level. There are consistent rumors of an American remake in development, but no word yet on who will produce or direct.

Man Bites Dog

Released in 1992, *Man Bites Dog* is a black and white faux documentary, also serving as a black comedy of the darkest kind, detailing what happens when a serial killer has a camera crew follow him around, recording everything he does - talking to them about philosophy and life in between murders, rape, and thievery. A labor of love, *Man Bites Dog* was produced with the help of friends and family of the film's director (Remy Belvaux), writer (Andre Bonzel) and star, Benoit Poelvoorde. The movie took a year to finish due to budget problems, yet it has gone on to become a true cult classic and a favorite of movie buffs for its ingenious premise that pre-dated *Natural Born Killers*.

Man Bites Dog is unflinching in what it does. The film touts itself as a mockumentary (granted, the comedy is there), but it's far more than that. It calls us out on our voyeuristic tendencies. We're part of this crew as they follow a killer, doing things that we know are most assuredly wrong, but we watch anyway.

Sadly, the film's director and co-writer Remy Belvaux committed suicide in September of 2006. *Man Bites Dog* was the only feature film he directed. The film went on to be released on DVD via Criterion and is currently available.



The Last Broadcast

Released in 1998, *The Last Broadcast* was one of the first in a new breed of hand-held horror. Filmed entirely in digital format (one of the first movies to do this), no film was used. *The Last Broadcast* is a fake documentary about what has come to be known as "The Jersey Devil Murders."

The film itself is comprised of interviews and footage taken from the final, ill-fated episode of a cable access television series called *Fad or Fiction*. The two hosts, Steven and Locust, had decided to take a couple of their fans along with them into the woods to hunt down the famed Jersey Devil. Instead, three of them wind up dead and Jim Suerd, the only survivor, is accused, and sentenced, for the murders. The documentary focuses on what led to these murders and attempts to unravel the mystery of whether Jim is indeed the real killer.

The Last Broadcast is a well done low budget film that many have said loses its way in the last few minutes, when it seems to drop the documentary format as

Continued on page 10

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continued from page 8



its film style. Smartly done, with the interviewees and the concept of tricking many viewers into believing what they were watching was a true story, the film suffered greatly due to the release of *The Blair Witch Project* which dominated theaters just one year later, and made box office history upon its release. While *The Last Broadcast* was first through the gates, many considered it a rip-off of the "Blair Witch" when they finally found it on rental shelves.

The Blair Witch Project

Considered by many to be one of the best hand-held horror films ever made, *The Blair Witch Project* was released in the summer

of 1999, and went on to become one of the highest grossing, and most successful, horror films of all time. Shot on a budget of around \$60,000, the film eventually grossed over \$240 million worldwide, making it the most profitable independent film ever produced, dethroning the former champion John Carpenter's *Halloween*.

The Blair Witch Project was also one of the first films to fully utilize the internet, thanks to a viral marketing campaign, with a website that helped feed the film's plot of being real found-footage from the woods of Burkittsville, Maryland. For those few who have never heard of it, *Blair Witch* is a movie put together thanks to "found footage" taken by a group of college students, as they were recording a film project for class, deciding to do a documentary on the history of the Blair Witch (a fictional character created for the film). After interviewing the townsfolk of Burkittsville, they head into the Maryland woods, never to be seen again. One year later, the footage is found, and we discover the terrifying tale of the young crew.

The Blair Witch Project shows off how much progression the hand-held horror film has made over the years. It leaves much of the horror to the viewer's imagination, allowing one to fully connect to the terror these characters endure. The fear is a palpable thing in many of the scenes, and that's because sometimes it's real. Nearly all the footage seen in the movie was shot by the three lead actors, only taking eight days to film. Almost all of the dialog was improvised as well. The stars never really knew what to expect as directors/writers Daniel Myrick and Eduardo Sanchez kept most of the staged-terror to themselves, so the fear in much of the feature feels genuine. An example being the tent scene, where one of the directors shakes the tent in the middle of the night, scaring the two of "filmmakers" and audiences alike!

The meshing of reality and fiction blurred greatly thanks to *Blair Witch*. Some people to this day still think the "found" footage is real (it's not). It is also the first hand-held film to make people nervous in the theater (much as *Cloverfield* is currently doing). The movie's jerkiness and running shots made people vomit in theaters across the country.

The film was slightly tarnished when a critically disappointing sequel was quickly released entitled *Book of Shadows: Blair Witch 2*, a year later. The title spawned a short lived young adult book series, comic books and computer games that continued the myths, and rumors are still floating around that there will be a third film, but for now there's been no sign of the Blair Witch.



Behind The Mask:

The Rise of Leslie Vernon

After reading the synopsis of *Behind The Mask*, you might think it to be another *Man Bites Dog*, but that is far from the case. Very aware of the horror films of the '80s, "Beward" owes more to *Scream* than any other film.

Released in a limited run of theaters back in March of 2007, *Behind The Mask* follows a documentary crew who are recording the events leading up to character, Leslie Vernon's first night as a slasher in a world where Freddy, Jason, and Michael Myers exist. The crew lags along as Leslie stalks his "virgin girl survivor," and visits his retired mentor killer. The film crew doesn't realize just how serious Leslie is about his mission, and their scruples kick in just a little too late. At that point, the film switches gears and becomes a full blown horror movie. *Behind The Mask* uses the faux-documentary well, and with the same message that many hand-held horror films have which is, just how far will the media go to shock and amaze us? It also warns about our gullibility when it comes to watching television. We get tricked into believing reality based on how the camera perceives it for us. We like Leslie, as does the film crew. He's a sweet guy, nice and polite... but we also fully know what he's planning on doing because he's telling us the whole time, even if we are not taking him serious. As he turns into the killer-on-a-rampage, it still surprises, giving a wake-up call to the viewers and the crew.

Director/Writer Scott Glosserman and his co-writer David Steve do a great job in both parodying and celebrating the slasher films of yore. Black comedic moments abound as are supporting roles by horror greats Robert Englund and Zeldia Rubinstein, plus a cameo by Kane Hodder.

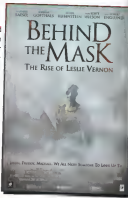
Cloverfield

The big bad monster of a movie that has taken theaters over everywhere, *Cloverfield* shows just how powerful the hand-held camera can be in a film! Producer JJ Abrams, the master of mystery, began very early in hyping his new monster film. The original trailer, when it was first shown, gave us little to go on, with the Statue of Liberty's head being flung across New York City and landing in the middle of the street, peeking everybody's curiosity. What could have caused such carnage? What made matters worse was that Abrams decided not to give audiences the title of this new project. Instead of a name we received a date: 11.18.08. When the premise for the film (and the final title) was finally revealed, the excitement doubled.

Taking a cue from *Blair Witch*, fake websites and news reports as well as MySpace pages were created to tie into the story. Each character in the film was given their own MySpace page which were updated on a fairly regular basis. Mysterious pictures appeared online at various places, and fake companies all had their own websites as well.

If you have yet to see the movie, allow me to give you the basic plot. Taking place on a typical New York night, a going away party is held by a group of friends for character, Rob, who is leaving for a new job in Japan. During the night, all hell breaks loose as a giant monster attacks the city. Since the friends were videotaping short goodbyes at the party to send with Rob when he left the country, it is decided to use this seemingly indestructible hand-held camera to record the night's events as a group of them try to make it out of the city alive.

Written by Drew Goddard, who has written some of the best



NEWS BITS

episodes of the *Buffy*, *Angel*, and *Lost* television series, the film utilizes the hand-held plot device in a way no other film has truly done. It gives us background on the characters, making them feel more real, and when the monster strikes it really becomes terrifying as you are more than just a little concerned for these people who are trapped in this nightmare scenario.

Cloverfield has already made a name for itself, not only with its unique approach to the giant monster movie, but due to the reactions by some audience members who cannot handle the shaky point-of-view camera movements. People have experienced motion sickness and nausea from the off-kilter and jumpy images on-screen. Most of Cloverfield happens on the move, with the lead characters scrambling constantly throughout the film's runtime. Some theaters even began placing signs in front of the cinemas warning people that they might get vertigo from the film.

Realistically done, with more than a little similarity to scenes witnessed during 9/11, Cloverfield is one of the biggest little camera movies ever made. One sequence had over twenty-five effects shots in it alone. The film cost only \$25 million to make, but on its opening weekend, it produced over \$40 million in the US, and broke the record for January releases. There are already talks of a sequel.

Diary of the Dead

Released on a limited number of theater screens this past February 15th, *Diary of the Dead* is the latest installment in George Romero's long-running zombie series (following *Night of the Living Dead*, *Dawn of the Dead*, *Day of the Dead* and *Land of the Dead*... just in case you didn't know).

Told from the point-of-view of a young wannabe documentary filmmaker, "Diary" is set in the first days of the zombie outbreak that we've seen in the aforementioned films. In terms of where it fits in the series, it's technically occurring at the same time as the events in *Night* (with strict continuity and logic taking a backseat to good old fashioned scares). The irony of the story is that the filmmaker-characters in the story had set out to film a horror movie of their own when the on-screen zombie attacks begin.

We, the audience, witness through the camera all the devastation and horror that can be seen, as the zombie outbreak spreads and soon engulfs the world. The filmmakers on-screen record the apocalyptic, as it were, and the final film presents an edited version of this "footage" for all to see. As one of the characters says in the film's trailer: "If it's not on camera, it never



really happened... right?" The film shows a need to record and preserve no matter what the consequences, so people one day will know what happened... be it for good or ill. George Romero is nothing if not a social commentator, and his zombie films have given him a great stage in which to work his magic.

Romero went back to his low budget roots with "Diary" - the film cost about \$10 million to make and was shot in twenty-three days. It was filmed entirely on hand-held cameras and also done completely as an independent film, George's first in twenty-plus years. Romero convinced some of his friends to

cameo as news announcers throughout the movie, as you'll hear some familiar voices, such as Simon Pegg, Quentin Tarantino, and Guillermo del Toro (just to name a few). Considering the dozens upon dozens of zombie films that have been produced since Romero first helmed "Night," it is interesting to see one of his own inventions mesh with hand-held horror - by his own hand at that!

The Poughkeepsie Tapes

Screened at the Tribeca Film Festival in 2007, *The Poughkeepsie Tapes* is set to be released in theaters later this year. The film chronicles the discovery and viewing of over eight-hundred videotapes shot by a serial killer of his crimes and activities over the years.

Written by John and Drew Cowdrie, and directed by John, the creepy concept is not a new one, but has yet to be really fleshed out on-screen. The film's murderer is based off many real-life serial killers, but as was the case with "Blair Witch", many fans have thought this too was a real story with real footage. It isn't, but the online world continues to argue about it.

Trailers and clips released thus far show a very disturbing collection of scenes from the killer's library. One in particular shows him walking up to a young girl and asking her if she'd like to see what "it" looks like through the camera. The film has already garnered great debate and controversy online about its subject matter. Once released, the controversy will no-doubt grow. The idea behind this film may bare some resemblance to independent titles such as *The Last Horror Movie* and the three-film trilogy (*Mordim*) by Toe Tag Pictures; however, with a bigger budget and the potential to release the film to a larger audience this disturbing technique may find a wider audience than its predecessors.



New Line Cinema announced that they are in talks with horror production company Platinum Dunes to re-launch the *Nightmare on Elm Street* film series. New Line said that they will hire a screenwriter once the *Wifery* Guild of America strike is resolved. The producers, Michael Bay, David Fuller and Andrew Form, are hoping to focus part of this new movie on Krueger's backstory (an idea that has been discussed prior to this news). Platinum Dunes are currently shopping their re-launch of *Friday* (to be directed by Marcus Nispel, who also directed *Durango* [Christian Maccione remake] for New Line, as well as remakes for *Near Dark* [for Rogue Pictures] and *The Birds* [for Universal], no word on if Robert Englund will be portraying the clawed-hiller Freddy Krueger, but we can only assume Michael Bay isn't THAT stupid.

Right before Christmas Rob Zombie asked his fans, via his official MySpace website - whether or not they would be interested in a feature-length version of *Werewolf Women of the SS* (based on the mock-trailer Rob produced for *Grindhouse*)? Apparently the possible film is severely being considered and that could result in yet another after-shock from last year's *Grindhouse* release. For those not keeping score - since the Tarantino/Rodriguez-directed double-feature was released, all co-participants to the project (the directors of the three-back mock trailers that accompanied the theatrical release) have all confirmed down the road laid out by the *Grindhouse*. Edgar Wright (the director of *Don't* [and *Shaun of the Dead*]) hosted a series of double-feature movie showings in LA throughout the winter months, while Eli Roth is hard at work on his next theatrical release - *Trailer Trash* (which is promised to include a new installment of *Thanksgiving*)! *Trailer Trash* is a proposed film that is made up mostly of mock-trailers for zany movie ideas ranging from animal comedies and cap films (as well as a few horror times). Before *SS* is considered to go into production, Rob Zombie will be finishing up work on his long-anticipated anti-feature: *The Haunted World of El Superbeasto*.

In a shocking announcement, Universal Pictures have revealed that director Mark Romanek has exited *The Wolfman* remake (taking creative differences) that was meant to begin shooting on February 18th. The film will star Benicio Del Toro as the werewolf, and the studio just signed Emily Blunt (*Charlie Wilson's War*) and Anthony Hopkins to play the other leads in the film. No word on how this sudden change will effect the film's expected February 09 release date.

An internet reporter revealed that Victor Salva has finally been given a tentative thumbs up to begin writing the script for a second sequel in his highly popular *Jeepers Creepers* film series. The early plan is for Victor to produce the film with another director helming the project (but we wouldn't rule out Victor directing in the end). Early reports also claim the film to (sadly) be directed-to-video. More on this as it develops!

ARGENTO: Mother of Tears

by Kenneth Neison

THE 10 BEST HORROR MOVIES THAT START WITH THE LETTER

Here's a list of horror-movie horror hits, ranging from the best to the worst. We know... it's pretty silly. So enjoy!

Halloween

In 1978, anyone who dared disagree that the premise that is attached with this 1978 John Carpenter classic is not only the best horror film to have "H" in its title, but actually stands as the best horror of all time?

Hellraiser

Released in 1987, this twenty-year-old Clive Barker classic is remembered for being one of the most off-the-wall horror ideas put on film. See last issue for all the reasons needed to place this film in your horror collection!

Howling

Spanked by his own director's relatives of *Pleasure and Pain* - *The Howling* (1981) is at the top of the heap when it comes to werewolf tales, let alone horror.

Hills Have Eyes

One of the most important horror films, *Wes Craven* has made a "Hill" (1977) has been copied (and revised) in great numbers, and turned Michael Berryman into one of the most iconic horror poster-boys of our time.

Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer

Michael Rooker became one of the most disturbing serial killers in cinema, forever marking himself as one of horror's best badasses with his role as Henry Lee Lucas in this 1989 John McNaughton "classic."

House

There aren't many post-modern haunted-house movies that stand out, and while *Steve McQueen's* *House* may not be the scariest - it is one of the most beloved by today's fans, who doesn't like seeing Richard Mull (*Witch Queen's* Bull) as an undead soldier?

Hitcher

Ridley Scott makes his horror debut in *The Hitcher* (1986), providing the ultimate reason to not "pick-up" strangers! Since *Hitcher* has appeared in many less significant roles.

House of Wax

Vincent Price... 3D horror... what's not to love? This film was considered for years to be one of the scariest in cinema. Then *Exorcist* came along, and re-defined what scary was.

House on Haunted Hill

This 1959 William Castle haunted house film is one of his best, and just so happens to also star the legendary Vincent Price.

High Tension

Released in America in 2005, this Alexandre Aja nightmare delivers one of the greatest horror-closer since *La Bête* (1976) that packed up his obsession - as well as one of the most brutal murder sequences in horror.

Coming from Myriad Pictures this spring is the culmination of a cinematic trilogy over thirty years in the making. Dario Argento's highly anticipated *Mother of Tears* concludes the "Three Mothers" trilogy begun in 1977 with *Suspense*, and continued in 1980 with *Inferno*. Each of the films concentrates on a powerful witch, cumulatively forming the aforementioned Three Mothers who rule the world with sorrow, tears, and darkness - already having made its rounds on the festival circuit, it was just released this past Halloween in Italy.

Suspense began the trilogy by telling the story of a young American girl who ventures to study at a dance academy in Germany. Little does she know the academy is ruled by Mater Sanguinarius, the Mother of Sighs and the oldest of the evil witches. The film was unlike anything of its time, basking in vivid hallucinatory colors and having a very loose, nightmarish logic. One of the film's standout features was the chillingly bizarre score courtesy of the prog-rock outfit Goblin. An instant classic of Italian horror cinema, a sequel was sure to follow, and it did just three short years later.

Unlike its predecessor, *Inferno* exhibited a much clearer narrative thrust, and specifically spelled out the mythology of the Three Mothers for the audience. The villain of the second installment in the trilogy was Mater Tenebrarum, the Mother of Darkness, the youngest and cruellest of the coven. Predominantly taking place in a secluded apartment building in New York, *Inferno* attempted many of the same color schemes as *Suspense*, although it came across as much more comic book-like in style. The film was a particularly hard shoot for Dario Argento, pushing the director away from completing the trilogy for many years. Over the next twenty-five years, rumors popped up from time to time that Dario had decided to attack the material yet again, though nothing obviously came to fruition.

Inspired, following a pair of successful stints directing episodes for *Masters of Horror* ("Jennifer" and "Pelts"), Argento decided it was time to finally conclude the story he had begun

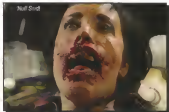


in late 2006.

The film's story revolves around an art student named Sarah Mandry, played by Argento's daughter and frequent collaborator Asia (Land of the Dead), who unknowingly releases the fury of the Mother of Tears when opening an ancient, mysterious urn. Sporadic and unexplained incidents of violence soon sweep over Rome in the wake of the Mother's release. Sarah, who may have some mystical powers of her own, is left to confront a terror made before her evil gains control of not only Rome but the rest of the world.

The setting of Rome was partially used in the middle installment of the trilogy. In fact, the *Mother of Tears* actually appears

in *Inferno* briefly before the action shifts to New York. Played by actress Anna Pieroni originally, the most beautiful of the Three Mothers obviously had to be recast since a solid twenty-five years had passed between entries in the series. This time around Moran Atlas, an Israeli model-turned-actress assumes the role of the Third Mother. A couple of other notable cast members for Argento fans include Carolina



Cataldi-Tassoni (*Demons 2*, *Opera*) and Dana Nicodri, Argento's ex-wife and mother of Asia. The film marks the first time that Dario and Dana have collaborated in twenty years. Also returning to the fold for the final chapter in this saga of alchemy is former Goblin mastermind Claudio Simonetti, who is handling the score of the film. Simonetti's influence was noticeably absent from the score to *Inferno*, whose duties were handled by Keith Emerson.

Early reaction to the film from its run on the festival circuit has been mixed with many touting the film as both excessively sexual and brutally violent. Unlike the previous entries in the trilogy which took an approach of the fantastic, *Mother of Tears* is reportedly staunch in its grotesque realism and overly unsettling at times. Will this be Argento's grand return to form? The legend's career has been in a rut since 1987's *Opera*, though his work over the last few years has shown an increased pulse.

The conclusion of the Three Mothers trilogy will receive a limited theatrical release on June 8th and will be rated NC-17.

Following its theatrical run, *Mother of Tears* will be released to DVD by the Weinstein Company, rumored to arrive in time for Halloween. Promising to be check full of witchcraft, lesbianism, and blood... what more could you ask for?



so many years prior. With a short script treatment of only several pages in length, Argento approached the writing duo of Jace Anderson and Adam Gierasz (Tobe Hooper's *The Toolbox Murders* and *Mortuary*) to help him flesh out the script for the story of Mater Lachrymarum, the Mother of Tears. The trio worked over the next couple months to get the story in shape for shooting, with the film finally going before the lens

Did You Know? James Woods was Dario Argento's original choice for the lead role in *Inferno*.

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BERGIE BARNISTER
(Phantasm)

MEGAN FRANCH
(30 Days of Night)

**LESLIE
EASTBROOK**
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BEST OF 2007 HORRORHOUND'S PICKS

This was a great year for horror - whether your favorite film is the box office on fire or not - the lack of quality was not an issue in 2007. Considering how much fun the Horrorhound staff had at the theater this year, we thought it would be just as fun to give our writers a chance to talk about their favorite movies of the year. Check out page 16 to find out what was voted the best of the year by the Horrorhound readers, thanks to last issue's mail-in questionnaire.

My pick for top flick of the year goes to **30 Days of Night**. The film engulfed itself in the bleak and isolated feel of Carpenter's *The Thing* while taking a very Romanesque approach in concentrating on the relationships between the human characters, and how they react to the nightmarish situation they've been thrust into. Great cinematography mixed with solid acting performances, and a few potent dashes of gore help make *30 Days of Night* the best vampire flick of the last twenty years... in my opinion.
Kenneth Nelson (Writer)

There were many great horror films this year, from *30 Days of Night* and *Grindhouse* to *Murder Party* and *Right At Your Door...* - but two films that horrified and surprised me more than any aren't really "horror." *Zodiac* was an amazing study piece on American history, and the serial killer that demanded attention from our nation. Its dissection of the mythos and history of these unsolved killings was pure cinematic art - and the movie didn't even feature a killer! On the flip-side, my other favorite film actually features possibly the most ruthless killer in all of fiction: *No Country for Old Men* stars Javier Bardem as the cold-hearted Anton Chigurh who ravages the screen like no other! This movie took shock of me and never let go.
Nathan Hanneman (Editor)

Sweeney Todd had everything: great acting, story, music, and blood by the buckets full. Taking all that was good from their previous collaborations, Depp and Burton created a masterpiece of gothic cinema. Their love of horror films shines through, with Depp's performance as Sweeney combining the intensity of Karloff and Lugosi, and the expressiveness of Conrad Veidt from the silent era. Add to that a supporting cast that delivers, and an over-all look that takes your breath away, and you've got my pick for best movie of the year.
Jessica Dwyer (Writer)

Death Proof has to be my movie of the year. I thought it lived up to its media hype, and was further fueled by the retro-noir concept of it being a grind house-style film. The movie was packed with women, cars and an always-impossibly selected jukebox soundtrack. Not as predictable was Zoe Bell's awesome performance, and the fact that Kurt Russell is still a bad ass! Sadly, middle-America wasn't impressed, taking away from the movie's success; however fans of Tarantino were pleased, and that's all that really matters.
Jason Brown (Proof-Writer)

Continued on opposite page...

REPO: The Genetic Opera

by Nathan Hanneman

After the success of the original *Saw* feature film, the creators of *Jigsaw* decided to step away from the juggernaut they had invented, allowing the distribution company (Lionsgate) to handle the future of the title. James Wan (the original director) and Leigh Whannell (writer/star) still had a hand in the creation of new installments for the franchise, however, it was newcomer Darren Lynn Bousman who stepped in to become the new *Saw* director. In 2005, he directed and co-wrote the initial sequel to the series while later going on to direct the third and fourth pictures as well. In between each yearly-release, word spread of a new film Darren hoped to produce for mass audiences. Just hearing the supposed-title raised the eyebrows of many knowledgeable horror fans. It was called *Repo: The Genetic Opera*. A horror musical unlike the films we have seen prior. It wasn't to be a camp-fest *Little Shop of Horrors* or a sly quasi-musical like the great *Phantom of the Paradise*. This all-musical opera edges to move plot through song until the final bloody frame. It was in 2008, after the release of *Saw III* that Darren finally began full production on "Repo" - working in between projects, and eventually leaving the *Saw* franchise after last October's hit fourth installment to finish this operatic release. The next *Saw* film will be handled by David Hackl, who actually worked as a production designer on the three *Saw* sequels, and *Repo: The Genetic Opera* as well!

The story of *Repo*, takes us to the future (not-so-distant, of course), as an epidemic of organ failures devastates the planet. Scientists gear up for a massive organ harvest to help secure the future of the human race, as a biotech firm creates new easy organ payment plans,



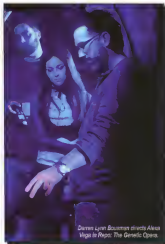
Anthony Head as Ogre (Skippy Pappas) watches.

allowing for the inevitable (but all-to-entertaining) set-up. Any financed organs are subject to legal default - ie. repossession at the hands of repo men. This is one repossession that you won't be able to walk away from, however. We recently had the opportunity to sit down with Darren to discuss the project, including the very exciting cast that supports the film.

"Jesus Christ Superstar! I think would be my favorite all-time." Darren tells of his inspirations, "I have seen it live probably six times, various incarnations of it. Tommy I think is another amazing achievement in musical form. Rent! I think is very interesting. While we are fans of musicals, we went out of our way to make this anti-musical. This is the anti-Rent, the anti-Dreamwork! If you did not like those, you will love this. A lot of musicals that go from stage to screen are usually very tame, they don't take risks. We are the opposite of that." It is a very amusing scenario as well. Being a movie/musical, many people no doubt will try to compare the film to those of the past (hopefully in a flattering light). This can be good or bad for *Repo*, depending on what film you reference when discussing this new horror romp.

"People are so used to comparing films, and that is unfair. *Repo* is definitely different from anything they have ever seen. When people say horror musical, people usually think *Sweeney Todd*, and this is nothing like "Todd." *Repo* is completely outside of the box, I would say we are more like *Blade Runner* meets *Rocky Horror Picture Show*. It's more campy than Todd, but I think this film will have people laughing, disgusted, and at the end, hopefully crying."

We all know what Darren Lynn Bousman can do, given the reigns of the incredibly successful *Saw* franchise, but he really steps it up with this amazingly original looking film that meshes a dose of steam-punk future-goth with seemingly foreign-style cinema that harkens back to such treats as *Dead-End Drive In* (1986), *Hardware* (1990) or *Razorback* (1984). The one thing horror fans will no doubt focus on is the cast. It has some surprises in that it stars non-traditional actresses Paris Hilton and Alexa Vega (*Spy Kids*) while also catering to the genre crowd with such names as Bill Moseley (*The Devil's Rejects*) and Anthony Head (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer's* Giles) in lead roles. "What is unique is the different types of people we have," Darren says of this eclectic cast. "You have Ogre, the singer of Skippy Pappas,



Darren Lynn Bousman directs Alexa Vega in *Repo: The Genetic Opera*.

BEST OF 2007 HORRORHOOD'S PICKS

continued from opposite page

This year offered some truly thought-provoking horror films. In theaters and straight to video Stephen King's *The Mist* was a pleasant surprise, and proved my critics. The social satire surrounding faith, religious fanaticism, and the will to survive was a breath of fresh air from all the cookie-cutter survival horror films released as of late. The *Lavender* creatures and plot, gruesome gore, and ironic conclusion just worked for this viewer. I eagerly enjoyed the straight-to-video film, *The Girl Next Door*. The bold decision alone to turn Jack Ketchum's reprehensible book into film is both courageous and daring. The film had the power to resonate in my mind for days, and while it is in the truest sense a horror film, there is no question in my opinion that as the years pass, this film will ascend into classic territory among the ranks of *What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?*, *Flowers in the Attic*, and *Mommy Dearest*. Aaron Crowl (Co-Editor)

If you were to ask me which film in 2007 was the best, I would have to say *Sweeney Todd*. Tim Burton managed to make a pitch-perfect adaptation of some incredibly witty material, and succeeded on nearly every front. I have to admit, however, that when it comes to pure, adrenaline-pumping enjoyment, *30 Days of Night* is my pick. I was all smiles when I left the theater after that one, and that's a tough thing to ignore. Eric Newell (Writer)

I have to say that 2007 really was a hard year to choose a great film in general for me, let alone a genre film. We as horror fans were surviving over so many releases, and I can only speak for myself when I say that I was let down too many times (it was holding off writing this so that I could see *AVP-R*). Matt said, "My five film of the year would have to be *Grindhouse*." It delivered the goods for me, and I give any other release this year! Travis Fulligan (Artist)

My pick goes to the ferocious vampire legends that populated *30 Days of Night*. The horror genre needed vampires to come back in a big way, and not as lonely souls seeking love, but as blood-thirsty creatures hell bent on wiping out the remaining inhabitants of Barrow, Alaska, over a grueling 30 day period when the sun never rises. Very faithful to Steve Niles comic book of the same name, this one pulled no punches, and also delivered a cast of likable human characters. Easily the best vampire film released over the last twenty years, and one that should stay burned into horror time frame for a long time to come. Dave Kossinko (Writer)

This was a really tough decision because there was no real clear cut winner in the horror genre in 2007. I was leaning towards *The Mist* and *28 Weeks Later*, but for just over-all content I had to go with *Grindhouse*. It wasn't the best film, but it was so much damn fun, and was truly a love letter to the horror fans. Sean Clark (Writer)

Paul Sorvino (*Goodfellas*), who has been in cinema forever... then you have Sarah Brightman who is like THE Broadway Musical star I mean, *Phantom of the Opera* was written for her! Then you have someone like Paris Hilton. You can't open up a newspaper without seeing her name. Ever person in this movie brings a different audience onto it. Even Bill Moseley... he is hilarious. I had so much fun recording the album. Two months before we went to Toronto for filming, we recorded the album. It was a great experience. There is no way you can watch *Repo*, and not pick out ten or fifteen songs, and keep singing them in your car!

With Paris always comes controversy, and it would be wrong for us, as print media, to not focus on her just a tad. So how was I working with Ms. Media? I think it was exciting for the first twenty minutes, but that quickly wore off because the media makes her out to be the entity and not this person, all these websites like TMZ, etc... they blow people out of perspective. She is not like people would think she is. You realize she is a real person, and it all goes away. She was great. She was very down-to-earth. She hung out with us, stayed at the same hotel as us, went to dinner, out drinking, there was no diva complex. I wasn't expecting to be hanging out with Paris Hilton at the Metropolitan Ball drinking beers, but she was like one of the team. It was great."

To counter that focus, many (including us) are extremely excited to see Anthony Head in the film. "Anthony, I wanted from the very beginning, but I knew it would be doing a disservice if I didn't audition everybody. We brought in so many people, but what's strange is that we have the best cast for this movie. There isn't one person that I wanted, and didn't get. I'm a big fan of the *Buffy* Musical, and that is why I wanted Anthony in this. He is the lead in this movie, and what he gets to do in it is going to be talked about."

The problem from square one has always been trying to get *Repo* into production. Holding a tentative April 25th release date for the past few months, we discussed the worries about the film's eventual release. "Every day," He says of the struggles. "Even right now. It is an uphill battle that never seems to end. I guess I was under delusions of grandeur to think that since I made a couple successful Saw films, they were going to give me the key to the city, and let me do whatever I wanted, but they didn't. I think I could have made any movie that didn't have singing in it, but even right now... it will be an uphill battle until the day it's finally released."

Sadly, with that statement, *HorrorHound* learned, literally two days before printing of this issue, that Lionsgate made the decision to push back the release of *Repo* to an undecided 2008 spot. As soon as it receives its final resting space, we will let you know!

HORROR HITS TOP 2007

1. **AMERICAN LEGEND** (\$253.3 million)
2. **ONIST RIDER** (\$115.6)
3. **DISTURBIA** (\$80.1)
4. **1408** (\$72)
5. **SAW IV** (\$63.3)
6. **HALLOWEEN** (\$58.2)
7. **SWEENEY TODD** (\$51.5)
8. **RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION** (\$41.4)
9. **AVP: REQUIEM** (\$41.4)
10. **30 DAYS OF NIGHT** (\$39.6)

Every year we look back at the most successful horror films of the previous twelve months. The beginning of 2007 started off slightly (such as *Grindhouse*, *Halloween* and *The Hitchhiker* under-performed), but the latter half of the year was an amazing turn-around for horror! Total (with special thanks to *Am Legend*), the top ten greatest horror films of 2007 pulled in over \$800 million! Who said horror's future was in danger? Other horror films to don't the box office in '07 included *The Bleeding* (\$25.4 million), *David Friesen's Zelig* (\$33) and *21 Weeks Later* (\$28.6). Aside from *Grindhouse* (above), other non-horror horror films to score money included *Number 23* (\$35.2) and *Premonition* (\$47.9).

*Am Legend and Sweeney Todd were still in theaters all press time

GRINDHOUSE: The Japanese Box Set

In a true test of patience, fans of the Quentin Tarantino/Robert Rodriguez team-up knew something was fishy when the Weinstein Group announced the Intel DVD release of *Grindhouse* was to be split into two double-disc releases with special features, added footage and missing the "taxi trailers." Yeah, we all knew it was a ploy to earn extra dollars on the film's investment - with both a feature-length, double-feature DVD release destined for production (which it is) as well as a mega-set that features both extended-edition two-disc sets, the theatrical cut of the double-feature with the possibility of some additional extra goodies (not yet announced). But if you REALLY can't wait until then, you may be excited (or angered) by this announcement. The Japanese beat us to it. Available as of March 21st, this six-disc set includes pretty much everything mentioned above, all in one tight package. Enjoy



Did You Know? While *AVP: Requiem* appears on the 10 Top Horror Hits list above, it actually boasts a disappointing profit, considering the first *AVP* team-up pulled in over \$80 million in 2004!

HorrorHound Fan Voting: BEST OF 2007 RESULTS!

Last issue, we asked the readers of HorrorHound Magazine to mail in or e-mail their choices for the best movies (including remakes/sequels and limited-release/direct-to-DVD), actors, director, gore scene and other aspects of the horror industry. After a couple months of tallying the votes - these are the winners, as picked by you the readers!

Best Movie of the Year: *Grindhouse*

The Quentin Tarantino/Robert Rodriguez three-plus hour double feature may not have lit up the box office, but it sure did make an impact on those who did see it! It wins here in a landslide! Runner-up: *30 Days of Night*

Best Movie of the Year (Sequel or Remake): *28 Weeks Later*

Many within the world of horror viewed the original *28 Days Later* as a zombie film featuring non-zombies. The sequel is definitely a horror film featuring some of the scariest non-zombies of all time. And the fans agree! *Halloween* trailed.

Best Movie of the Year (Limited Release/Direct to DVD): *Behind the Mask*

It was a photo finish between Leslie Vernon's hand-held horror hit and Adam Green's *Hatchet*, but *Behind the Mask* edged out the win this year!

Best Director: Quentin Tarantino/Robert Rodriguez (*Grindhouse*)

Fans once again chose the Tarantino/Rodriguez team-up with *Grindhouse* as the winner of this voting category proving yet again that while the dollars didn't show it - this double-feature did make its mark! Runner-up: Rob Zombie (*Halloween*).

Best Actor: Kurt Russell (*Grindhouse*)

He rolled on screen oozing a mixture of James Dean meets Michael Myers, and delivered one hell of a performance throughout. Kurt Russell was easily the fan's choice for best actor in 2007! Runner-up: Will Smith (*I Am Legend*)

Best Actress: Rose MacGowan (*Grindhouse*)

When you replace a woman's leg with a machine gun - she will get attention. And this year Rose MacGowan received a ton of it! She won the best actress category by a landslide - outdoing the amazing Zoe Bell (runner-up)

Best Gore Scene: "Head Rip" from *Hatchet*!

Horror fans love gore and this category showed it, as *Hatchet*'s "Head Rip" barely won the voting for best gore scene, still ahead of *28 Weeks Later*'s "Helicopter Death" and *Deadproof*'s "Car Crash," all earning a near-equal number of votes

Best TV Series or Movie: *Dexter*

After failing to win last year, over Showtime's *Masters of Horror*, *Dexter* finally receives some well-deserved love! The story of a serial killer, who actually works for the police is a great concept that has only gotten better in its second year!

Best DVD Release of 2007: *Monster Squad*

It was one of the most requested DVD releases of all time, and when Lionsgate delivered the title, they delivered the goods - with amazingly in-depth features, commentary and other assorted bonus features. Runner-up: *Evil Dead*.

Best Toy Line of the Year: *Cult Classics!*

With releases such as two Hannibal Lecters, David and Michael from *The Lost Boys* and the Hare Krishna Zombie - it's no wonder fans picked *Cult Classics* as their favorite horror toy line of 2007! Runner-up: *Marvel Zombies* (Diamond)

Best Comic Book Series: *Marvel Zombies vs Army of Darkness!*

Ash seems to be one of the most popular comic characters of our time, and teamed-up with arguably the hottest single horror title currently in comics. Of course the fans would be attracted! Runner-up: *Tales from the Crypt*.

10 QUESTIONS WITH Mick Garris

Each issue we sit down with a different horror director to discuss film, home life and other assorted tidbits that happen to come into play. The result? 10 Random Questions. This issue *Masters of Horror* creator, and director of such memorable films as *Sleepwalkers*, *The Stand* and *Riding the Bullet*: Mick Garris! *HorrorHound* was able to steal a few minutes away from Mr. Garris's busy life to find out those ten seemingly random questions that you, the readers, may or may not have wanted to know.

HorrorHound: What is the greatest horror movie trailer of all time?

Mick Garris: I was lucky enough to work on one of them: *Scanners*. But the trailer for *The Exorcist* is a classic: that great shot of Van Sydow in silhouette in front of the building is truly great.

HH: The most under appreciated actor award goes to:

MG: Boris Karloff. Never got the credit he deserved for the genius-ness and reality he brought to his performances. Some very modern, and often subtle emotions and pain, incredibly imbuing even the Frankenstein monster with feeling.

HH: The first celebrity you ever met (and geeked out over)?

MG: The Three Stooges. When I was a kid, they came to a department store near me, and I waited in a long line to meet them, and buy a record they made, which they autographed to me. It was the final version of the Stooges, with Joe D'Amato.

HH: What's the first special feature you watch when you put in a DVD?

MG: I hate to admit it, but I rarely watch the special features.

HH: What is the scariest car of all time?

MG: Personally, I've never been scared by a car. I'll have to try it sometime.

HH: Name one horror director you wish would have directed a *Masters of Horror* episode?

MG: How about four? We came close with all, but timing is everything. We never got Romero, or Craven, or Cronenberg, or del Toro.

HH: Do you think political horror will end after this election?

MG: I hope not. We live with political horror in our real lives all the time. George Bush is far more terrifying than Jason Voorhees or Michael Meyers or Freddy, and he's shed a hell of a lot more blood. I love when artists make political statements in the world of horror. One of my proudest moments was being a part of Joe Dante's "Homecoming."

HH: What is the scariest thing you've ever seen?

MG: It wasn't in a movie. And that's all I'll say.

HH: Name the one Stephen King book that NEEDS a film.

MG: *Bag of Bones*. And we're working on it.

HHMG: Fill in the blanks: A perfect evening at home includes watching *FARGO* on the TV and dining on Indian food.

Keep an eye open for Mick Garris's future projects, such as the new horror anthology TV series *Fear Itself*, and his production of the feature film - Stephen King's *From a Buckle* 8 (to be directed by Tobe Hooper).



CHOICE CUTS:



We know... it isn't the best DVD cover of the year, and the year just started. Last fall's amazing horror treat *30 Days of Night* lets DVD on February 26th and includes eight special features as a commemorative with Josh Hartnett, Melissa George and producer Rob Tapert, plus eight behind-the-scenes featurettes!



On March 25th, Sony will debut the straight-to-DVD remake of the slashers' favorite April Fool's Day. Based on Fred Walton's classic 1984 novel, this new film is directed by the *Butcher Bros.* (The *Halloween*) and stars Scott Taylor-Crompton (Rob Zombie's *Halloween*).



If you didn't get a chance to catch Steven C. Miller's *Automaton Transfusion* at the various film festival showings throughout 2007 (including *Howarth House*), then on March 4th, you will finally be able to check out this twisted film as it's released unrated and uncensored as part of Dimension Extreme's label!



Johnny Legend presents Alan Rudolph's *Barn of the Damned*! Released back on January 29th, thanks to Legend House Studios, this letterboxed release can be purchased for \$19.95 online at www.legendhouse.net. Includes a videotape episode of *GoreBeat*, with John Landis and company.



If *Primal*, *Rogue* and *Lake Placid 2* weren't enough, we now have *Black Water*! This new gator-film follows three friends and their fight for survival against the man-eating predator. Presented in widescreen, extras will include a filmmakers' commentary, deleted scenes and a making-of featurette.

PROMOTIONAL FUN

This month we have a few great new promo items from the *Blade* horror film *30 Days of Night*. A slick red T-shirt, each newspaper, glow stick and flashlight were all available! A few small items from *Swamp Thing* were available in the form of a poster, button and stickers. Also, look for the sweet large-scale choice for *The Eye*.



Interested in hunting down fun movie promo items? If you can't make it to a local convention (a common place for freebies) or sit in on a movie screening, *HorrorHound* eBay auction site local and at www.horrorhound.com.

Horvic-Ness



Not long after the single-story DVD release from the story lived *Blade* the TV Series, we finally received the complete episode collection starring *Stacy Fung*! The "Too graphic for TV" set includes audio commentaries by Peter Dinklage, David Goyer and David Johns, plus a making-of documentary.



Some movies are pegged for theatrical release, and never seem to get it. After a year in waiting, *Catcombs* is finally being released (sadly, only on DVD). Extras include commentary with the writers/directors (Tamm Cohen and David Eliot, a "descendant into *Catcombs*" featurette and more.



The Day of the Dead "remake" (starring Mena Suvari and Ving Rhames) hits directly onto DVD this April 8th! Extra to be included? Director and cast commentary, trailer and an alternate ending. The movie messes with the infected "zombies" in a small town, making it far from Romero's original.



The mega-blockbuster starring Will Smith, *I Am Legend* hits DVD this March 18th in a single disc theatrical cut and two-disc special edition (with four animated comic stories and what's referred to as an unrated alternate theatrical cut). Blu-ray and HD versions of the film will follow on April 8th.



We know all you *HorrorHounds* have been anxiously awaiting for this one! It's season one of the Sci-Fi channel original *The Invisible Man*! Extra on this 5-disc set includes commentary on the pilot, a *sci-fi* with creator Matt Greenberg, and a bonus episode from season two. In stores March 25th.



Aside from sporting a *Thrasher* looking cover on the cover of the DVD, Robert Kurtzman's *The Rage* hit stores on February 26th, and included such bonus material as a making-of featurette, an effects and behind-the-scenes set galleries, plus two music videos.



On March 18th an archival widescreen edition DVD releases the thriller *The Stick House*, starring Gina Philips (*Jeepers Creepers*) and directed by Curtis Roroy. With the director's commentary, this disc will include such special features as a director's commentary, a making-of featurette, and deleted scenes.



Innate Entertainment releases the thriller *Sisters*, starring Gloria Swanson, Stephen Rea, and Lou Dolan. This disc will include such special features as a director's commentary, a making-of featurette, and deleted scenes.



Dark Sky Films will release *Them*, starring Olivia Bonatti, Michael Gough, and Adriana Moca. On March 25th with a retail price of \$24.98. The disc features a widescreen print of the film, a making-of featurette, and a commentary with director Peter Kosminsky, plus movie trailers.



Warner Entertainment and Martin Scorsese teamed up to release *Val Lewton* on DVD this past January. Scorsese produced and narrates this exploration of the legendary film producer who helped create classics like *Cat People*, *I Walked with a Zombie*, and *The Body Snatcher*.

The Demise of Independent DVD?

It has been over a decade since fans made the switch to DVD. A hard change for many at first, but technology advances, and so must we. While many saw this new format as a great opportunity to begin a new collection, even more of us were still stubbornly picking up those obscure, out-of-print VHS titles. Nobody knew what would eventually happen to those beloved titles of yesteryear. Consistent ramblings of obvious madmen expressed the continual "fact" that those rare titles will disappear forever. *Near Dark* was extinct! *Monster Squad* was doomed into obscurity, and video tapes were wearing out everywhere. How long will we have to wait for them to be released onto DVD, if at all?

Thanks to many independently ran film companies, such as Synapse Films and Unearthed, we began to see a resurgence of such titles as *Vampire Lobos*, *Maniac Cop*, *Frankenhooker*, the Guinea Pig films and so many others. These were titles that, even before the VHS "boom" had ended, were never really available for purchase. Hell, many of these films were on their way to becoming nothing more than another lost memory. But with today's marketplace in doubt, many of these companies, who for years have been a best friend to us HorrorHounds, are on the verge of oblivion. A shrinking marketplace, a confusing new-media war, online "robbery," and difficult new title acquisitions have begged the question - will we soon be facing the demise of independent DVD?

Bringing home the classics.

Do bigger film studios release classic horror films onto DVD? Yes and no... When "the heads" see an opportunity to capitalize on a title, they will. But is it done solely for us, the fans? Sure... for our money... but that's business! Here we are, in the year 2008, and there are currently more films available on DVD for purchase than on VHS back in the '80s. A large part of that is in thanks to smaller run DVD companies. Not only do they find those moldy-olies, releasing them for an all-new generation to enjoy, but many of them go to great lengths to restore the prints, hunting down lost and excised materials and interviewing the cast and crew (most of who have long forgotten about the films themselves or are ignorant to the fanbase they maintained).

During these early days of DVD, many within the genre began to realize the ease of obtaining licenses for some of their favorite (and hard-to-find) titles which were being ignored by major studios. Knowing the filmmakers themselves, or having an idea of where original prints and extra materials exist, these "fans" soon became bonafide DVD production companies. Media Blasters released a multitude of European horror films throughout the last ten years, mainly due to the company's interest in the product. Anchor Bay made a name for themselves by purchasing the DVD distribution rights to the *Evil Dead* trilogy as well as John Carpenter's *Halloween*. Big studios allowed smaller companies to produce titles they owned due to the fact that most of these titles were "under the radar," and a licensing fee worked well enough for the number-crunchers. This was long before major studio heads realized the value of this new home video format. Soon enough, independently-produced DVDs carried a majority share of shelf space at most retail outlets. Trama films, who have fought many years keeping up the good fight for independent film, suddenly had the distribution-doors opened for them, as new electronic and retail companies such as Best Buy and Media Play begged for new films for fans to devour. The playground was vast, and horror fans reaped the benefit!

Who makes these wonderful toys?

In the late '90s many companies stepped up to the plate, delivering licensed product to retail - titles many hadn't been seen on home video since the '80s! Dark Sky Films, Blue Underground, Severin and Subversive Cinema are some of the most notable, however, with the increase of popularity in the marketplace, many of these companies found it harder to obtain rights to films. Michael Baronas (formerly of Media Blasters) mentions to us about one such instance: "Once the European license holders got wise to the vast amount of companies wanting these films again, they jacked up the price, being virtually unaffordable to the smaller companies to release with any sort of profit." With these growing problems in the industry, those who wanted to survive had to evolve to that next level. Transitioning toward working with big film studios (rather than against them) was a step into the right direction for some. Michael Felsher, formerly of Anchor Bay films, now runs a successful company titled Red Shirt Pictures. Working with studios, Michael has been able to do what many in this indie-industry have been doing for years. Obtaining rights on titles, producing a fan-boy's delight of special features, making-ofs, lost footage and commentaries, but instead of releasing it himself, he convinces the studios to do it for him! Within the last two years, Michael has been able to produce new DVD releases of *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre 2*, *Hellraiser*, *Creepshow* (UK), *The Burning*, *Eaten Alive* and one of the



most anticipated DVD releases of all time - *The Monster Squad*! Most of the time, such releases are "broke" into release, thanks to sudden support from filmmakers or a movie's anniversary. "Keep in mind, I don't consider the studios the villain in this situation," Felsher tells us. "These are BIG companies man. They've got a lot on their plate, and it doesn't always allow for attention to twenty or thirty-year-old genre films with a smaller fanbase." It's not that they are against releasing any film to DVD, but if you can construct viable reasons and selling points for why a title would turn a profit for them, my experience has been that they will listen... eventually.

There are times, to everyone's surprise, the major studios don't even realize they own the rights to a title, having purchased it through a former-studio buy-out. Fans asked for years why *Monster Squad* went unreleased? It wasn't because "Compass A" didn't want to release it, it's that nobody knew who owned it! The rights to the film were folded three times over, as the distribution rights were sold long ago (and folded as well). Through consistent buy-outs and deals, both title ownership AND distribution rights ended up (coincidentally) on Lionsgate's table last year. This is a good example of how independent companies have helped out the industry. Big studios have neither the time nor money to invest in a search to unearth licensing rights to films they may or may not own. It comes across to many as a lack of support to the industry, but at the end of the day, the facts behind their "disinterest" is there, and sadly it makes sense. But with this seemingly lack of studio support in the horror industry, some studios do continue to work with companies still in the fight, licensing out titles they may deem unworthy of their production time, while they have still personally released other highly requested titles when the opportunity arose to do so, including such titles as *From Beyond* and *Twilight Zone: The Movie*.



Business soon turns cold.

So what is happening to independent DVD companies today? In short, they are being shut-out, or being put out of business. By who? For starters, retailer giants such as Best Buy, Blockbuster and Wal-Mart, but more importantly by fans. Yes, even us fans are in some ways responsible, as we continue to rent or "burn" titles, rather than purchase-to-own these "collectible" gems. You claim that you want to buy these titles, but are having a difficult time finding them in stores? Well, you are correct. Thanks to larger retail chains, who used these companies to build their DVD-buying consumer base, many DVD companies are being shut-out of new store shelf space in trade for films sporting those classic Warner Brothers and Universal Studio logos. A recent trip to a standard Best Buy retail store, located nearby the HorrorHound offices, revealed a whopping 150 various horror titles to choose from in their "horror section." Upon closer inspection, the closest company to be considered an "independent" on the shelf featured the Anchor Bay and Lionsgate logos. So why the lack of shelf space for companies such as Tarten Video or Dark Sky Films? According to our research, Best Buy stores will only stock less than 30 new horror units per-week, per-store! They are growing more and more selective with their product choices, and even with the smaller titles they take, they are not letting them breathe on the shelves for very long. If it doesn't sell a certain amount every week... it's gone. "Eleven years ago when we started Synapse," adds Jerry Chandler of Synapse, "if you could sell thirty copies a month across the country, your title would stay on their shelf. Today you have to sell one-hundred units a week to stay on their shelf. That's impossible unless you're a studio. Not enough fans visit chain stores to buy indie product, so the chain stores get rid of it." Look up the stocking information for companies such as Target or Circuit City, and you will find similar methods. This shrinking market is definitely affecting small companies, as the beleaguered Trama are on the verge of extinction, having recently been forced to sell their long-established building in New York City. The fact is - there is only so much space a brick-and-mortar retail store can reserve for horror, and big-budget new films are sadly the majority-public's go-to choice when shopping.

The changing marketplace.

The lack of shelf space used to not matter in the world of DVDs. When the '90s were coming to a close, the format was white-hot, as stores eagerly anticipated any new disc release that featured the words "special edition" on the title. Some retailers took advantage of limited-release companies, stocking obscure titles with pride, and allowing pe-public their first chances at watching *Tron: Legacy* and *Juilet* or *Blood Feast*. However, internet illegal downloads began to hinder retailer's chances at DVD and CD sales, leaving retail chains such as Media Play, Suncoast and Tower Records suffering in sales. In the early 2000s, most of these struggling chains began to close their doors for good. The remaining outlets now carry a virtual monopoly over these feature-film-dollars, and can stock whichever titles they choose - no more competing against each other for first-week sales of new blockbuster releases (instead of classic rereleases). If that wasn't enough - the movie rental industry took an amazing turn over the last ten years. The rise of Blockbuster (and other similarly-run rental chains) forced mom-and-pop stores out of business. The most negative

effect has been the expiration of horror (and porn) titles available for consumers to rent. "Family friendly" was the keyword at Blockbuster, however, the company began to see a crisis with the advent of DVD. The home video market stole their business, as more and more families wanted to create a library, rather than rent it. Changing over their VHS library onto DVD wasn't cheap either, as consumers lost interest in the "be kind, rewind" technology. The advent of mail-order rental chain Netflix really put Blockbuster (and those other rental chains) into a vice. Blockbuster eventually began their own online rental service, but too little too late. Many brick-and-mortar rental outlets have shut their doors over the last few years and DVD companies have lost some major avenues for distribution.

Confusing new HD marketplace.

Joe public isn't that dumb. They remember the annoyance of switching over their VHS collection onto DVD. Now the marketplace is shifting yet again. DVD sales are not growing at the rate they once were, and the confusion over the new HD disc format has been a real time-killer for the industry, and a big ball of confusion for consumers. Sony's Blu-Ray format has been at war with HD-DVD, as studios pick and choose which format they feel best serves the future. "You have two competing formats," Jerry Chandler of Synapse tell us, "People are afraid to buy DVDs 'cause they are under the impression that everything is coming out on HD. They won't buy anything until this format war has been decided. The problem is, everything is not going to come out on HD or Blu-Ray. There is something like 200 million DVD players on market, and if we have a really good title we might sell 5-10,000 pieces. If we have half a million Blu-Ray players, how many HD copies of *Street Trash* are we going to sell? Ten?" Online enthusiasts (who are overly-familiar with TiVo) also realize the idea that we may soon be facing the possibility of online (or digital storage) collections, with i-Tune-esque purchases on all titles leading to a non-physical movie collections. That is a truly scary thought. How can any one of us know for sure what the future holds anymore? Stick with DVD? Move onto HD, and if so, which version? Or wait it out for that next technological advancement? It currently feels like nothing seems to be moving forward, and we're all just stuck at the platform waiting for the train to show up.

In closing...

We are not asking you to stop shopping at Best Buy and Wal-Mart. Just remember that the internet is a key source for media purchases as well. Check out websites such as Amazon.com, DeepDiscountDVD.com or XploitedCinema.com (some of these companies don't even include shipping charges or tax). Netflix does carry many titles from many of the companies mentioned in this article. Give them a rent if you must - and if you like what you see, try purchasing the title and supporting this dying industry, instead of burning it. These dollars spent turn into production costs on that company's next investment. In closing, we are simply stating that these companies are still out there, doing what they do best - Serving you. If you wish to find independent cinema, you more than likely have to find the source. Their official company website! Jerry Chandler put it best when he told us that "when all of the independent companies are gone you are going to be left with the vanilla studio video-of-the-week and bootleggers. It is up to the fans to stop this, and the only way they can is to buy (I'm not saying buy Synapse, but buy from companies that are giving you quality product)." ❖



TOY NEWS

HORRORHOUND
EXCLUSIVE!

MONSTARZ

Over the past ten years, watching the evolution of horror movie action figures has been like enjoying a highlight reel of the greatest icons in the industry. From the creation of McFarlane Toys' Movie Maniacs line to the invent of Sideshow Collectibles, and the breakout success of NECA - we have been given three-dimensional collectibles varying in everything from the Universal Monsters, and the New Line House of Horrors (Freddy, Jason and Leatherface [in mass quantities at that]) to much lesser icons from such films as *Bubba Ho-Tep*, *Candyman* and *Dog Soldiers*. Within the last year, a shift seems to have been made in the industry with Mezco Toys' acquisition of the New Line Cinema horror license, the decline in Cult Classics for NECA, and the virtual non-existence that is SOTA Toys. To help "watermark" this change-up in the industry, we have an all-new toy company exploding into the marketplace in 2008 - and they have actually been around longer than SOTA, NECA and even Sideshow Collectibles! Their name is Amok Time Toys! Based out of New York, "Amok" has been an established collectibles store for fifteen years. They have a brick-and-mortar store and a popular online catalog that caters to the industry on all fronts. Over the past few years Paul Lazo, owner of Amok Time, has been slowly pushing toward creative products for exclusive sale through his website - such as horror and B-movie model kits. In the last year, Paul's been moving closer and closer to revealing his final goal - to produce officially licensed action figures, busts, and statues, to be available through all specialty market retailers (and more importantly - his own store!) A long-time acquaintance of many top sculptors in the toy industry, Paul began work on snagging licenses for small production run figures with such talent as Ray Sanolen and Moto Suiga who have been working on these new licenses. *Night of the Living Dead*, and *Gort & Kilaau* (from the so-fi classic) 12" action figures were actually premiered at last fall's *Chiller Theatre* convention.

The big news this month comes to you exclusively in *HorrorHound* as Paul finally reveals his plans for a new "Maniacs" style 7" action figure line to encompass some of the biggest (and most overlooked) icons in the genre - ones that have yet to be immortalized in plastic. The big question is - why did it take until now to get them? "We have been selling everybody else's toys for all these years, so we thought we could do something pretty damn good ourselves." Paul recently told us in a discussion that revealed many of this article's news bits. "We have been in business for about fifteen years, so I think we will be going about this the right way. We are picking stuff that we are really into." The line is called *Monstarz*, and shown here is just one of three 7" figures currently in production - *Bub* from George A. Romero's *Day of the Dead*! Sculpted by Jean St. Jean, the figure includes an uncanny likeness to the main-zombie character as well as a host of cool accessories - such as his chain-base, a chum bucket, razor, cassette tape, gun and alternate holding arm (as well as some great hidden articulation!) To top it off - Paul has plans to follow *Bub*'s release with *Day of the Dead*'s opening zombie - "Dr. Tongue!" How soon these figures will hit stores will be even more shocking, as Paul and his crew have been working on the line for nearly nine months without word one being leaked! "We want to make sure that everything we say is coming out this year, comes out this year." Paul mentions of his release schedule, "We don't want to be one of those companies that show you the world, and then you only get one figure in a year. Everything we show will have a concrete release date and will look kick ass, so when



people see it they will know that it was done the right way." *Bub* is due by July, the plan is to release one figure at a time, with short pauses between each release. At least two other figures are planned for '08, both of which stem from licenses that don't revolve around George Romero's dead trilogy! The "Night" 12" figure line has already begun pre-sale at amoktime.com, and includes the *Heinzman* Zombie, *Barbara* and *Ben*. More 12" scale figures are in the works, such as classic '30s-'40s film "monster" *Rondo Hatton* (*The Brute Man*), *Tor Johnson* (*Plan 9 from Outer Space*) and horror host *Zachary*. The *Cool Ghoul*. On top of this, Paul has informed us that he hopes to produce everything from large-scale figures, resin busts, and statues on all of his licenses (which also includes *Universal Monsters* and *Battlestar Galactica*), in all he expects upwards of twenty new products in stores throughout 2009! With Toy Fair occurring just a few weeks after this issue goes to press, the possibility that Amok Time had a few more surprises in store was reserved for this annual New York event. Check out next issue for all the extra bits!

The Gort and Kikatu 12" scale figure two-pack comes with removable helmet (Kikatu) and will stand this May. Gort will be available initially as a single figure release and will actually stand at an impressive 15"



Limited to 500 pieces, look for the Rondo Hatton 12" in June. Rondo and NOTLD figures come in special window box packaging.



The 22" tall Creature from the Black Lagoon robot figure harkens back to "Big Frankie" days (Aurora). Look for the Gillman in stores this September, and to be followed by the release of the Frankenstein Monster himself, in this all-new line of Universal Monster products.



Barlow 12" available this August. Ben 12" available this November.

Interested in purchasing some of the products shown in this article? Visit www.neaonline.com for individual sales, special orders and wholesale. Items also available at specialty shops and online retailers.

HORRORHOUND'S MOST WANTED!

Way back in *HorrorHound* #2, we featured our most-wanted horror action figures of all time. Since then, two years have passed, and a handful of figures from that list have been realized in 3D, from NECA's David (The Lost Boys) and Mazze's Chop Top (Texas Chainsaw Massacre 2) to the upcoming Bul (seen on opposite page) and Gentle Giant's The Grudge figures (tentatively due in stores before year-end). Because of all of these releases, we decided to poll the *HorrorHound* staff once again to decide on a new ten most-wanted figures list! With any luck we won't have to wait two years to see half of THIS list realized! Check it out!

Regan MacNeil
(The Exorcist)

Herbert West
(Re-Animator)

Zombie
(Fulci's Zombie)

Tarman
(Return of the Living Dead)

Jack Torrence
(The Shining)

Monster Squad

Pennywise
(It)

Nightbreed

Julie Zombie
(Return of the Living Dead 3)

Barlow
(Salem's Lot)

NECA

Two big announcements this issue come from NECA Toys. First, in the form of their new "Sam" action figure from the upcoming feature film: *Trick 'r Treat*, and secondly, the highly anticipated 18" Alien figure! Aching to become a new iconic character in the world of horror, Sam, in his pumpkin-shaped burlap sack'd guise, is in the midst of a merchandising campaign for a film that should have been released last fall! With added interest in *Trick 'r Treat*, we can only hope these figures won't be available without their film counterpart for long. The 18" Alien shown below features one of the best sculpt's of this classic H.R. Giger-designed creature. Look for both of these new products to hit store shelves before the end of spring. NECA's annual Cult Classics: Hall of Fame line is sadly being cut down to three figures, for release this spring. A near-completely resculpted Captain Spaulking (House of 1000 Corpses; with a Murder Ride backdrop), Eric Draven (The Crow; with new fiery base) and Michael Myers (Halloween; with sheet/glasses and newly sculpted head) round out this assortment. With Toy Fair comes exciting new announcements, so here's hoping 2008 turns into a memorable year for horror, and the Cult Classics banner at NECA!



This past July, Gentle Giant Studios announced their intentions of entering the horror industry, when they unveiled a series of new statues and mini-busts based on the New Line Cinema House of Horrors characters. On top of this, they revealed plans to produce an all-new 7" scale action figure line based around Ghosthouse Picture's 30 Days of Night feature as well as The Grudge. Half a year later, and we finally get a look at the final figure assortment, which now includes three figures (Marlow, Iris and Arvin). Each figure will include a "build-a-figure" piece that makes Ullth, the young vamp shown below. As for The Grudge? We have been assured that those characters have not been cancelled, but will be reworked into a new series of figures, to be announced at a later date. As for 30 Days of Night? Look for them in stores soon as well as a line of collector statues and prop replicas.



This past Christmas, many HorrorHounds were looking for that special someone may have spotted a couple new collectibles from the A Nightmare on Elm Street and Saw franchises. Both items (shown here) were found exclusively at Target's Gifts. This 24" "Novelty Doll" comes from Paper Magic Group, the same company responsible for the puppet and pig-face masks released this year. Also found in this interesting light box with sound, featuring the Saw franchise's nightmare-invading child-murderer.



Available this month, Dark Horse Comics has a new statue based on the Creepy character (shown here) from the '80s comic, Creepy magazine. Standing just over 14" tall, the suggested retail price on this piece is \$150.

Did You Know? Bump in the Night Productions revealed that this fall they will produce a new line of costumes, masks (and more) based on the Army of Darkness license!!!

Sideshow Collectibles

Shipping this April comes one of the more interesting new Universal Monster collectibles produced by Sideshow - the Creature from the Black Lagoon premium format figure! Swimming at a suggested retail price of \$349.99, and standing at 24" tall, this new statue was sculpted by Oluf Hartvigson, Anthony Mestas, Heath Hammond, Leo Silva and Manuel Silva! Also recently announced for a SRP of \$349.99 comes the Blade vs Dracula polystone diorama! Available this May/June, this piece is available for pre-order today at SideshowCollectibles.com.

If you are a big fan of AVP: Aliens VS Predator: Requiem then Sideshow's latest poseable model kit import by Hot Toys will be available this Spring for a SRP of \$179.99. This first installment in Hot Toys' "Diorama Masterpiece Series" stands an impressive 16" tall. What comes next? We are just as eager to find out!

If the Hot Toys imports are exciting you - and you are a fan of survival horror, then you may also want to check out

Sideshow's website for a look at their import line of Resident Evil 4 video game-inspired action figures, which carry a SRP of \$139.99 to \$149.99 each!



An interesting line of action figures known as Cosbays (by Hot Toys) are being imported via Sideshow Collectibles. Standing at 3" tall, these AVP toys are now available online for just \$7.50 a piece!



MEZCO TOYZ

We know who scares you. They have invaded your nightmares for the past twenty-plus years. More frightening, they have invaded your toy collections! Last year Mezco revealed their acquisition of the New Line Cinema horror license, which consisted of Freddy, Jason and Leatherface. Fans' reactions cannot be ignored. Mezco's Darvin Glonek revealed to *HorrorHound* that most of the New Line horror's have officially sold out, with emphasis on the "10" plush items (below) and *Living Dead Doll Leatherface*. "We can't even finish shipping our purchase orders," he adds about the new wave of collectibles. Find 'em while you can!

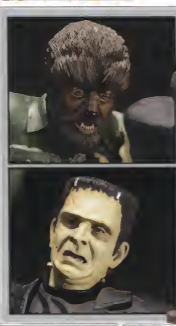


You may remember Diamond Select Toys' Mini-Mates line (blocky figures) from past issues of *HorrorHound* via Marvel Zombies. If that wasn't enough to tide you over, DST announced that they are set to release this four-figure set based on the 1991 hit *Silence of the Lambs* including the Clarice Starling, Buffalo Bill and two versions of Hannibal Lecter (with various accessories).



Left: The last Mini-Mate release based off the Marvel Zombie comics.

Below: Sideshow Collectibles unveiled the first in their new ongoing series of statue-dioramas based on the classic Universal Monsters. To start the line off, they have picked an impressive scene from the 1943 title: *Frankenstein Meets the Wolf Man*, which plays off strikingly well against the original 1-sheet poster art as well as existing uncanny likenesses of the title characters, the Wolf Man (Lon Chaney Jr.) and Frankenstein's monster (Glenn Strange).



DOLLS in HORROR

by Aaron Crowell

A Century of Dolls in Horror

Pedophobia is the fear of dolls. Its symptoms typically include shortness of breath, irregular heartbeat, sweating, nausea and the overwhelming feelings of dread and anxiety. Almost every one of us has experienced a mild bout of this phobia at some point in our lives, whether it was a creepy one-eyed kewpie doll, the glassy stare of a mannequin at your local department store or an eerie ventriloquist's dummy. This primal fear normally manifests in our youth when our imagination runs wild with the horrors of the closet monster, the thing under the bed, and yes, even our own dolls and toys, waiting for the dark of night to snuff us out. Since we all grow up and learn that dolls can't "really" come to life, much less set out on a consummate killing spree, we sleep a lot easier at night. For a century now, filmmakers have TOYed with the notion of suspending the viewer's disbelief, by exploring our fear of dolls through celluloid, in the hopes of inducing nightmares.



George Méliès

Animating the Inanimate

In movies today, all things are possible. Dolls walk, talk and even kill, often motivated by a curse, possession, its owner's mental disorder (such as schizophrenia) or hatred for others. For a full century, the living doll on film has endured constant evolution, terrifying us with each new technological special effect advancement. Just over a century ago, the idea of a doll or inanimate object visibly moving on-screen without strings was an unimaginably terrifying idea on its own. Enter magician-turned-filmmaker: George Méliès. His cinematic career began as he started making short films (nearly 500) in the late 1800s through the early 1900s. This French director's shorts are often classified as horror due to their ghostly imagery and morbid themes. His 1896 film titled *Le Manoir du Diable*

(*The Haunted Castle*) is even regarded as the very first horror film in history. Using the ultimate illusion of cinema, he was able to astound and terrify viewers by animating the inanimate, dismembering bodies (only to reanimate them), and sinking (and exploding) heads. In 1908 he directed a short film titled *La Poupée vivante* (*The Living Doll*). Méliès accidentally discovered stop-motion animation after his camera jammed, allowing him to create filmed magical feats. He was also the first to use cinematic techniques such as the fade-in, the fade-out and the dissolve. He is often regarded as "the godfather of special effects," heavily influencing, and paving the road for such pioneers as Willis O'Brien and Ray Harryhausen. Thanks to George Méliès's discovery and innovation in cinema, the "living doll" was born.

Deadly Dummies

Times change, and so did cinema with the invention of the "talkie;" motion pictures could now be heard as well as seen. *The Great Gabbo* was a dialog-filled, singing, dancing, psychological dramatic spectacle. The movie was released in 1928, and featured Erich von Stroheim as the ventriloquist Gabbo, with the first on-screen creepy wooden dummy, named Otto. Von Stroheim's character uses his dummy as his primary means of expression, always

conversing with Otto on and off stage. As he begins to depend too heavily on Otto, we see him descend into madness. While *The Great Gabbo* was not a horror film, it did introduce "the schizophrenic ventriloquist and his creepy dummy" theme to cinema. This yarn, involving the mentally unstable, speaking and acting out their inner thoughts and emotions through their wooden alter egos, became a popular trend in horror, both on television and in theaters for decades to follow. Often, the story unraveled leaving you, the viewer, guessing right up to the finale: was the ventriloquist projecting his insanity through the dummy or was the dummy really alive? The first film to present this plot device was the 1945 anthology titled *Dead of Night* (in its "Ventriloquist's Dummy" segment). A ventriloquist, Maxwell Frere (Michael Redgrave, father of Lynn and Vanessa), seems to be controlled by his dummy Hugo Fitch. When the dummy decides to discuss its job prospects with American rival ventriloquist Sylvester Kee, betrayal leads to murder. Ray Bradbury's

story of the same ilk titled "And So Died Rabouchinsky" aired first as an episode of the Alfred Hitchcock Presents TV series back in 1956, and then again appropriately on *The Ray Bradbury Theater* TV series in 1998. The most popular film to follow this theme of mental illness and ventriloquism was *Magic* (released in 1978), starring Anthony Hopkins as ventriloquist Corky Withers and the voice of his dummy, Fats.

The *Twilight Zone* aired an episode titled "The Dummy" in 1952: When a stage performer believes his dummy Willie is alive, he makes a plan to start over with a new one. In the closing scene, it is revealed that the ventriloquist is now dressed as Willie, and the dummy has now become the ventriloquist. However, the "role reversal possession" theme first premiered on the big screen with *Devil Doll* (released in 1964). A very influential film that involved a ventriloquist/hypnotist named The Great Vorelli who murders his partner, then by using soul transference, places his spirit into his dummy Hugo. After the doll murders Vorelli's first assistant Magda, suspicion and questions arise. In the finale, the doll gets the upper hand, as roles are reversed with Vorelli's soul becoming trapped in the dummy, leaving his partner free, and in full possession of Vorelli's body. *Devil Doll* was the first film where we

actually saw the dummy stand up and walk, breaking physical contact from its master, proving to the audience either an impressive hypnotic trick or that the doll is in fact alive. Special effects had not advanced enough yet though, so the dummy Hugo was played by little actress Sadie Corne. In a 1964 episode of *The Twilight Zone*, titled "Caesar and Me," a dummy appears to be alive, if only to serve as a bad influence on his companion. In Dario Argento's 1975 seminal film *Deep Red*, we see an unexplained mechanized dummy attack, only to see it destroyed. The story also involves a killer with an obsession with baby dolls on nocces. A low budget exploitation indie horror film called *Black Devil Doll from Hell* (which comes across as more of a comedy really), was released straight-to-video in 1984, and with an interesting approach to the evil dummy possession tale, complete with the very first scene of a dummy



committing rape, a true landmark. Director Roland Emmerich's 1985 film *Making Contact* (aka: *Joey*) starred an evil dummy named Fletcher who battles a young boy using telekinetic powers. A 1988 episode of *Friday The 13th: The Series* titled "Read My Lips" dealt with Hitler's pink silk boutonniere that animates a ventriloquist's dummy who in turn forces his master to let in exchange for a successful stage act.

In another 1988 television series called *Monsters*, more puppet problems emerged in the episode "Holy's House." When a puppeteer star of a children's show announces her pregnancy, she begins to lose control of her puppet co-star Holy. The puppet reveals she is in fact alive, and proclaims she never wants to be separated from her puppeteer, thus

leading to murder. Separation anxiety is another commonly used motive to illustrate the killer doll's reasoning for committing



of mannequins around us coming to life was still chilling. In 1972, an Amicus film titled *Asylum* featured a segment called "Mannikins of Horror." In this story a possibly insane man creates small tin windup looking homunculus, with one doll featuring an uncanny representation of himself. He tells the doctors he can act through his doll by focusing his will, and does so which leads to murder. *Tourist Trap*, released in 1979, is easily the most disturbing horror film to fully utilize mannequins for scares. A killer surrounds himself with mannequins that appear to move on their own. We as the audience later discover that he actually possesses telekinetic powers. The film's closing scene is quite creepy with the lone female survivor (clearly now insane) riding off with her murdered friends all seated in the vehicle (now as mannequins).

The 1980 gorefest titled *Maniac* introduced a psychopath (named Frank Zito) who kills young women, and puts their scalps on mannequins which he displays throughout his home, while leading to a very horrific conclusion.

In 1987, the *Tales from the Darkside* series offered up an episode called "Mary Mary." The creepy story deals with an isolated woman who turns to her dolls and mannequins for friendship when she is unable to relate to the living. The 1989 television episode of *Monsters* titled "Mannequins of Horror" follows a nurse trying to help a patient obsessed on perfecting his day mannequins, only she soon learns how much of a connection they actually share. *The Fear* (1995) follows a group of people having fear therapy sessions at a secluded cabin in the woods. The group tell their inner most fears to a wooden mannequin (named Morfy) as part of their therapy. The creepy wooden man soon begins to use the groups worst fears as a means to kill them off. A follow-up film was released in 1999 titled *The Fear: Halloween Night* (aka. *The Fear: Resurrection*) with the same basic outline of events. Full Moon Pictures' final film released prior to their brief departure from movie making was the 2002 release *Jigsaw*. The movie tells of five students who use a



filmed *Pin*. When a doctor's son transfers his alter-ego into an anatomically-correct medical dummy named Pin (after Pinocchio), who he always believed to be alive, jealousy leads to homicide. The popular HBO series *Tales from the Crypt* offered up their dummy tale aptly called "The Ventriloquist's Dummy" in 1990. This horrific episode centers on a young struggling ventriloquist, his deformed conjoined twin brother, his childhood idol and gore. *The Dummy*, released in 2000, makes no mystery of its jealous homicidal ventriloquist dummy named Tommy.

Most recently, a film titled *Dead Silence* was released about a female ventriloquist who is viciously murdered and buried with her "children," a handmade collection of Vaudeville dolls. Her spirit and the dolls return from the grave to seek vengeance. The film is a solid example of today's technological advances in cinema, and proves that the decade old killer dummy theme continues to evolve and scare.

Mannequins in Horror

Not dolls in the truest sense of the word, but mannequins are basically life-size articulated "dolls." These to-scale representations of the human body have littered horror cinema for decades, both assembled and with limbs strewn in the background (often acting as subtle precursors of violent insanity). The 1960 episode of *The Twilight Zone*, "The After Hours," tells of mannequins who take turns living. When one forgets that she is in fact not alive, she returns too late and learns the awful truth. The tale was not very scary, but the uneasiness of the idea

mannequin provided by her professor to act as an effigy to decorate with items from their past life experiences. The students then meet up and party, while they stick their items on the mannequin, each telling their own tale. After the effigy is decorated and buried, it comes to life setting out on a homicidal hunt for the students.

When Toys and Dolls Attack

Toys and dolls are manufactured and purchased as a means to bring joy to children, brightening up their little lives... what better place for evil to snipe? As



DOLLS in HORROR



Rod Serling put it best: "Sometimes the least likely objects can be filled with the most likely horror." It was a natural progression in cinema for toys and dolls to come to life with evil agendas, but FX were limited due to a lack of

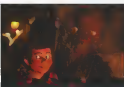
know how and small budgets, forcing filmmakers to be inventive in the process. In addition to horror-themed wrestling and sci-fi flicks, the Mexican movie industry was the first to bring the prospect of killer toys to cinema. In the 1961 Mexican film titled *Curse of the Doll People*, a group of archaeologists pay no heed to superstition when they steal a small sacred idol. After invoking a curse, the group are stalked by zombie-like dolls carrying large needles. Once stabbed, the victims turn into vengeful dolls themselves. The theme of actors depicting the murderous living dolls in Mexican films was not limited to *Curse of the Doll People*. The film *House of Evil*, released in 1968, gave rise to the theme of murderous toys, even if the killing automatons portrayed in the film are simply actors dressed up.

Television was the first to use a real doll as the antagonist in one of the most popular episodes of *The Twilight Zone* titled "Living Doll." A doll named "Talky Tina" does battle with a frustrated father when it begins to utter such phrases to



The seldom remembered 1981-82 television series titled *Darkroom*, hosted by the late James Coburn, delivered another killer-toy tale. In the episode "Siege of 31 August," farmer Rority Cox is tormented by his memories of war when his son's toy soldiers multiply, and come to life only to attack him. The toy soldiers are played by real actors, but are seen on-screen as being only an inch in height (but prove quite a menace). A very similar story aired in the 2006 television series *Nightmares and Dreamscapes: The Stories of Stephen King* in the episode "Battleground." William Hurt plays a successful assassin-for-hire who gets more than he bargained for when he kills the owner of a toy company, only to receive a mysterious box of army soldiers at his plush condo. The soldiers come to life on a mission of murderous revenge. In a true testament to advances in FX technology today, the soldiers in this episode are created using computer graphics (and done quite well, I might add). A 1983 British film called *Xtro* deals with a boy's father who is abducted by aliens, then returns to bestow his son with the power to bring items (like his toys) to life. Mean old neighbor, Mrs. Goodman, tells victim to the boy's new-found power when he sends his life-sized plastic G.I. Joe doll (played by an actor in a mask) to get bloody

revenge on his behalf. Also in 1983, a slasher film called *Curtains* used a creepy doll to great effect, especially on the film's poster art. In 1987 director Stuart Gordon, with the help of Charles Band's Empire Pictures, brought his film, simply



him as "I hate you" and "I'm going to kill you." The episode was even spoofed in *The Simpsons' Treehouse of Horror III* Halloween special, decades later. Another very frighteningly effective tale of the killer doll appeared in the 1971 television series *Night Gallery* with the episode "The Doll." When a British Colonel's daughter receives an ominous looking African doll in the mail, we learn of its murderous mission (complete with twist ending).

A successful radio program called "Lights Out" focused on macabre themes, crime thrillers and the supernatural. The program was also one of the first to capitalize on the innovative first person narrative. The show moved to television in 1946 becoming a regular running series in 1949 until it was killed off by *I Love Lucy*. A television movie pilot was aired in 1972 to little success involving a tale of a toymaker who develops a method to bring dolls that kill to life.

In the third story of the 1970 made-for-television movie

Trilogy of Terror (titled "Amelia"), a killer doll attacks Karen Black. When a seal is accidentally broken on the relentless "Zuni Fetish Woman" doll, it springs to life providing the first truly terrifying killer doll committed to film. Aside from the fact it can not be stopped, what makes the Zuni doll so scary is its maniacal growling voice that was effectively created by the uncredited Walker Edmiston.



titled *Dolls*, to life. The picture marked the first in a series of killer doll and toy films to become a trademark for Band's Full Moon Pictures. *Dolls* plays out like a modern fairytale, or morality play, with the stop-animated toys only doing bad things to bad people in a series of gory murders. The long-running television show:

Friday the 13th: The Series deals with an antique store that sold cursed items which must be tracked down and relieved from their owners before misfortune and death ensues. The first episode titled "The Inheritance" deals with the first of these accursed items: a child's doll. The doll gives his new young owner dark powers while also murdering her stepmother. At the end of the episode, the doll is safely recovered by the show's heroes. In 1985 perfection was achieved in the realm of killer dolls movies in terms of story, doll and FX magic with *Child's Play*. The star "Chucky" spawned a string of steadily worse film sequels (see article on page 30).

The year 1989 should be considered the year of the killer doll, as we saw the first picture in the longest-running film series, *Puppet Master*, and the rise of Full Moon Entertainment. Home video was still huge during the '90s, and Full Moon wasted no time in taking full advantage of the never-ending hunger for horror at home. Band and Full Moon's goal was simple: create low





budget horror, sci-fi, and fantasy movies that retain a somewhat big-budget look. The studio has released no less than seventeen films to date, utilizing the killer toy theme. Titles like *Demonic Toys*, *Dollman*, *Ragdoll*, *Blood Dolls*, *Doll Graveyard*, and crossovers like *Dollman vs. Demonic Toys* and *Puppet Master vs. Demonic Toys* sprouted up like weeds in video rental stores throughout the last two decades. Full Moon even released a re-imagining of *Puppet Master* titled *Reel Puppet Master*.

In 1999, The '90s also gave us the fifth and final installment of the *Silent Night, Deadly Night* film series dubbed *The Toy Maker* in 1991. In this chapter, a toy maker named Joe Peto (played by Mickey Rooney) builds and unleashes his own brand of killer toys.

A female-looking Chucky doll, possessed by a satanic spirit, can be seen in the 1992 title *Dolly Dearest*. And who can ever forget one of the most terrifying doll-attack moments in Tobe Hooper's 1982 hit *Pollangeter*? The scene was later spoofed with a very disturbing homoerotic slant in *Scary Movie 2* (2001). In the urban horror film *Tales From the Hood* (1995) segment titled "KKK Commemorative," White Supremacist electoral candidate Duke Meiger (Corbin Bernsen) sells his campaign headquarters in a southern plantation haunted by dolls that possess the souls of slaves wrongfully killed there. *Trilogy of Terror* returned in 1996 with a made-for-television sequel starring, yet again, the beloved Zuni Fetish Doll (sans Karen Black).

Pinocchio's Revenge harkens back to the befamiliarized mystery often seen in the dummy films: is the puppet alive, is the owner becoming possessed or simply mentally ill? Even *The X-Files* couldn't resist an evil doll episode. The show's creator Chris



"Entertaining, high-class horror."

Dr. Stephen A. Rank, President of the Academy of British Film, Fantasy and Horror Film.

Below is a list of films and television programs which feature scary or twisted dolls, mannequins and toys. Year by year - make sure you check out each of these thrilling stories!

- 1930 - *The Living Doll*
- 1939 - *The Great Gallop*
- 1945 - *Dread of Night*
- 1950 - *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* (episode #20 "And So Dead Rides Chatterbox")
- 1962 - *The Twilight Zone* (episode # 51 "The Dummy")
- 1963 - *The Twilight Zone* (episode # 34 "The Alibi House")
- 1967 - *Curse of the Doll People*
- 1963 - *The Twilight Zone* (episode #126 "Living Doll")
- 1963 - *The Twilight Zone* (episode #116 "Cassius and Me")
- 1964 - *Dead Doll*
- 1968 - *House of Evil* (also *Terror of Death*)
- 1971 - *Hotel Galaxy* (episode "The Doll")
- 1972 - *Light of Day* (film)
- 1975 - *Argem*
- 1975 - *Deep Red*
- 1975 - *Trilogy of Terror* (TV movie)
- 1976 - *Allegit*
- 1979 - *Susie's Toy*
- 1980 - *Maniac*
- 1981 - *1983 Darkness* (episode "Sage of 31 August")
- 1983 - *Toy*
- 1983 - *Crucible*
- 1984 - *Black Devil Doll From Hell*
- 1985 - *Making Contact* (also *Joey*)
- 1987 - *Tales from the Darkside*
- 1987 - *Episode "Mary Mary"*
- 1987 - *Dolls*
- 1987 - *Friday the 13th: The Series* (episode #1 "The Interview")
- 1989 - *Friday the 13th: The Series* (Season 2, episode #8 "Hired My List")
- 1989 - *The Ray Bradbury Theater* (episode "And So Dead Rides Chatterbox")
- 1989 - *PM*
- 1990 - *Monsters* (episode "Hell's House")
- 1993 - *Child's Play* (also 4 sequels)
- 1993 - *Puppet Master* (also 8 sequels)
- 1993 - *Monsters* (episode "Mannequins of Horror")
- 1993 - *Tales from the Crypt* (episode "The Werewolf's Dummy")
- 1997 - *Silent Night, Deadly Night Part 5*
- 1997 - *Dollman*
- 1998 - *Demonic Toys*
- 1998 - *Pollangeter*
- 1998 - *Dollman vs. Demonic Toys*
- 1998 - *The Fear*
- 1998 - *Tales from the Hood*
- 1998 - *Trilogy of Terror 2*
- 1998 - *Pinocchio's Revenge*
- 1997 - *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (episode "The Puppet Show")
- 1996 - *The X-Files* (episode "Chinga")
- 1996 - *Small Soldiers*
- 1999 - *The Fear* (remake)
- 1999 - *Ragdoll*
- 1999 - *Reel Puppet Master*
- 1999 - *Blood Dolls*
- 2000 - *The Dummy*
- 2002 - *Jugate*
- 2004 - *Puppet Master vs. Demonic Toys*
- 2004 - *Mannequin*
- 2004 - *The Doll Master*
- 2004 - *Angel* (episode "Sins of the Fathers")
- 2004 - *Saw* (also 3 sequels)
- 2005 - *Doll Graveyard*
- 2005 - *Nightmares and Dreamscapes* (episode "Nightmares")
- 2007 - *Dead Silence*
- 2008 - *Black Devil Doll*



Carter collaborated with Stephen King on the script for "Chinga" involving a little girl believed to be a witch who carries a spooky porcelain doll. Joe Dante directed a not-so-scary take on killer toys in the genre-bending family comedy *Small Soldiers* (1998). Two notable Asian films, both based on creepy dolls, and released in 2004, are *Mannequin* and *The Doll Master*.

Billy the puppet has emerged as one of the top modern horror icons, having appeared in every Saw film released from 2004-2007. He was used by the Jigsaw killer (toy maker John Kramer) to communicate with his victims before their final test. Last, but not least, is *The Black Devil Doll*, a film that returns the killer doll theme to the last subgenre expected to make a return: Blaxploitation Horror. From the sick and twisted mind of Shawn Lewis, former editor and publisher of *Blackest Heart Magazine* (and creative force behind *Rotten Cotton Graphics*), comes the sleaziest Blaxploitation horror film ever envisioned. Shawn's description of the film follows: "Five naive young women are raped, abused, and tortured by an evil, live-ass talking ventriloquist doll possessed by the spirit of an executed black militant death row inmate. Who will survive? What will be left of them? Will their virginity be intact? It's Chucky meets *Dolemite* in this violent yet sexy horror film directed by up and coming genre director Jonathan Lewis." Look for it on DVD and at film fests world wide in 2008! We spoke with writer Shawn Lewis recently about *Black Devil Doll* from Hell and its similarities with the 1984 direct-to-video film *Black Devil Doll* from Hell.

Here is what he had to say:



Shawn: No, it's not a remake. I guess you can say "loose remake" if you like, but I'd say homage if anything. Yes, the title is similar, both dolls are black and there is some sex, but that's the end of the similarities. *Black Devil Doll From Hell* is one of the many inspirations for our film. If anything it is a homage, and we are proud to say so. The script, plot, story, dialogue, and characters in our film are original and do not have anything in common with *Black Devil Doll From Hell*. I think our trailer should make it pretty clear that our film is an entirely different beast. Check it out at www.myspace.com/blackdevildoll.



Fun Fact: June Foray, the voice of the Talky Tina doll, was also the voice of Mattel's Chatty Cathy doll, upon which the doll in her *Twilight Zone* episode was based.

REMEMBERING CHILD'S PLAY A HORROROUND RETROSPECTIVE

By Eric Newell and
Jessica Dwyer

Wanna Play? *Child's Play* Begins.

It was in the mid 1980s when UCLA college student Don Mancini was attempting to come up with an idea for a horror script. His ultimate goal for writing the story was to acquire an agent in Hollywood, and eventually break into the business of movie making. He had no idea that his story, originally titled "Blood Buddy," would give birth to a cinematic icon that is still going strong over twenty years later.

There have been many conflicting stories throughout the years as to what exactly inspired *Child's Play*, but at the end of the day it appears to be a two-pronged effect for Mancini. Born in 1963, the writer drew first on inspiration from his childhood. He recently sat down with *HorrorHound* to chat about the series, and immediately began to discuss where the initial idea came from. "My dad worked in advertising and marketing," he explains. "As a kid I was privy to and exposed to marketing campaigns that my dad worked on. I remember vividly the term 'Consumer Traaees' [That's actually what the ad world calls kids. So you take kids, and you want to train them to get into the habit of buying things because that's the way the world works. Even as a kid I found that hilarious, yet scary. So when I was in college, and I was thinking of something to write... my initial impulse was that I wanted to write some kind of dark satire about how advertising and marketing affect kids"]

Mancini took his satirical view on the marketing world, and rounded out the story with a parody of an insipid trend in the late 1980s, the proliferation of the "Cabbage Patch" doll. Mancini also realized, after the success of Joe Dante's *Gremlins* in 1984, that animatronics had evolved to the point where it was finally possible to make a doll a full fledged character. When asked about cinematic influences, Mancini lists the "Living Doll" episode of the original *Twilight Zone*, the film *Magic* (1978), and the seminal killer doll classic, *Trilogy of Terror* (1975).

In the original version of the story, a young boy named Andy receives a "Buddy" doll as a gift. This doll, as Mancini described, contained "synthetic blood" underneath his skin, which would force parents to buy special bandages, should the doll's skin ever be punctured. Andy forms a special attachment to his new found friend, and in an innocent act of affection, decides to become "blood brothers"



The original 1985 US one-sheet for *Child's Play*.

with his Buddy. The act of sliding into his skin and joining his blood with the doll has unintended consequences, and soon people start to die around the young boy.

Another feature of Mancini's original script is that the audience is left wondering who is doing the killing for much of the story. Eventually, it is discovered that every time Andy falls asleep, Buddy comes to life and murders someone who is perceived to have "wronged" the boy. The perception that the audience is left with is that Buddy is somehow representative of Andy's "id," a subconscious manifestation of his frustrations and anger.

Mancini's initial draft of the script was finished in 1985, and it was almost three years later before anything happened with it. Eventually, a roommate of Don's who worked at Orion as a writer's assistant passed the script on to her boss, who then passed it on to his agent. The agent liked the script, and went on to sign Mancini as a client, fulfilling the initial hope that he had for the story. What happened next, however, was the real surprise.

This is where producer David Kirschner, who had solidified his role in Hollywood two years earlier by writing and executive producing the animated film *An American Tail* with Stephen Spielberg, comes into the picture. In an amazing twist of fate, David was actually seeking out a script that somehow involved the concept

of a killer doll. David explained to us his thought process, "I was very new to the film business," he begins. "I had said to my development person at the time, that I would like to see a script that has something to do with a doll that is responsible for murder." David was inspired by a recent trip he had taken to the United Kingdom, and a book he had read while there titled *The Victorian Doll House Murders*. He read Mancini's script, liked what he saw, and began shopping it around.

David then pitched a revamped version of the story to United Artists. In David's version, the blood swap as a means to animate Buddy is replaced with the now-familiar story of "The Lakeshore Stranger" Charles Lee Ray being reincarnated in doll form. "I wanted something that told more of where this killer came from," David said. "And Charles Lee Ray was named after my childhood terrors - Charles Manson, Lee Harvey Oswald, and James Earl Ray" - In this new interpretation of the story, Charles Lee Ray is a sadistic murderer who



Shown Left: An original outsize-size Chucky doll featuring the original logo on his chest. Above: A complete set of 1985 French promotional lobby cards for *Child's Play*.

Shown on this (and opposite) page: Original officially licensed Child's Play Chucky Halloween masks by Revlon Concepts

is killed in a shootout with police in a toy store, only to end up transferring his soul into one of the dolls. United Artists liked this new take on the material, and agreed to fund the production.

With a budget in place, David brought in a young writer by the name of John Lafia to rewrite the script using the new take on the material. According to David, much of Lafia's draft is what you see today in the finished film. When it came to hiring a director, David decided to go with Tom Holland, a veteran in the genre who had made his name with such films as *Psycho II* (1983) and *Fright Night* (1986). Before filming began, Tom did his own pass on the script, fixing what he described as a problem with the main characters.

"The original screenplay had a great concept," Holland told us. "The script had problems with it from my vantage point because you didn't feel a great sympathy for the little boy. And so [the problem] was making the little boy sympathetic, and getting the mother to a point where she was motivated to save him." Also added in Holland's draft is the idea that voodoo played a part in the proceedings. David explains the changes Tom made. "In my original script, I just had this scene where he put his hand on the doll when he died, and it transferred his soul. Tom [Holland] felt that there needed to be something to substantiate that action, so he brought in this whole idea of voodoo."

Kirschner then went about designing his villain from the fairly detailed description given in Mancini's original work. Much care was given into giving Buddy just the right look, right down to the scars that appear on his overalls, which all end up being used as implements of death by the end of the film. The final result was suspiciously close to the "My Buddy" Doll, a product that had been brought to market by the Hasbro Corporation after Mancini had first come up with the idea. Still, David was weary of getting into a legal entanglement, and the doll had a name change. He became a "Good Guy" doll by the name of "Chucky," a name that Kirschner used to affectionately call his brother-in-law Charles. It was at this point that the monster Child's Play was settled on for the title, and with that, a new horror icon was born.

When it came to casting, Holland immediately brought in two people with whom he had a working relationship. For the male lead, he brought in Chris Sarandon (The Princess Bride), a veteran actor with whom he had previously worked with on his film *Fright Night*. Sarandon played the detective Mike Norris, a rough and tumble Chicago cop who for most of the movie suspects that Andy is responsible for the murders occurring. For the family unit, Holland chose actress Catherine Hicks (Star Trek IV) as Andy's mother Karen, and as her son, a young

SORRY JACK...CHUCKY'S BACK!



The original 1990 US one-sheet for Child's Play 2

unknown actor by the name of Alex Vincent.

On the casting of the youngster for the role, Holland had this to say: "We found Alex in New York, and we got under a table to interact with [him]. Alex was the most natural of the little boys. I don't think he had worked before, and he had nothing 'cute' about him like a lot of little kids that are actors. He just felt real, and he was really honest." Finally, television actress Dinah Manoff (Empty Nest) was cast as Andy's aunt, who winds up being Chucky's first victim in the film.

Casting the voice of Chucky proved to be one of the most critical decisions for Holland to make. For that role, he went back and cast another former collaborator, veteran actor and Oscar nominee Brad Douff. Brad had gained notoriety in Hollywood by turning in a stirring performance in the 1975 drama *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, and had since won over genre fans by appearing in such cult classics as *Dune* (1984) and David Lynch's *Blue Velvet* (1986). This time though, it was only his raspy, tortured voice that was needed.

When Brad sat down with us recently, he mentioned another connection that few people know about. Apparently while Douff was teaching a course at Columbia University on directing actors, a young Don Mancini audited his class. "At the time that he had my class, he was already thinking about it," he said. "I think he had already written the script." Despite the coincidence, it was mainly his connection to Holland (the two had worked together on an episode of Stephen Spielberg's television anthology *Amazing Stories*) that landed him the job. With the final piece of the puzzle in place, nothing was holding *Child's Play* back from becoming a horror classic.

The film went into production in December of 1987 with a budget of roughly \$16 million, and was shot at the historic "Brewster" Apartment building in Chicago, Illinois, with additional stage work done at Culver Studios in Culver City, California. When asked what the biggest hassles were on-set, Holland answers immediately: "His animatronic co-star. He seemed eager to talk about how difficult working with the killer doll was. 'It was a bitch!' he proclaims. He then went on to praise the puppeteers who worked on the project, including Kevin Yagher, the 'head executor' of the Chucky doll, and Howard Berger from legendary effects company K&B. 'All of those guys did brilliant work, and it was a bitch.' Holland continues about the doll, 'I mean it was really, really difficult to get that doll to work at all, and to maintain the illusion that it was alive. I remember they had trouble controlling the eyes and getting the eye line right. So I spent a lot of extra time shooting the doll, just trying to get it so it would look like he was looking in the right direction. There were all kinds of problems that were discovered and dealt with during the process, and everybody who worked on it was a long-suf-

BACK OFF JACK CHUCKY'S BACK **CHILD'S PLAY**



Above: An assortment of original VHS, Laserdisc, and DVD releases from the Child's Play franchise. Also shown: Various licensed plush Chucky dolls and promotional Child's Play 2 bumper sticker

Quoteable Quotes: "I promise I won't kill anyone else." - Brad Douff (*Child's Play 2*)

REMEMBERING CHILD'S PLAY



fering genius."

While conducting interviews for this article, it also became apparent that certain personalities on the set of the original film did not mesh well.

Without getting into personal details here, it seems as though tension on the set contributed to a very charged atmosphere, even resulting in a handful of physical altercations. As it turns out, working with the Chucky doll was the easiest aspect to deal with while shooting.

Having made it through the rocky production process, it was time to edit. Holland slaved away in an editing room for weeks before submitting his first cut to the studio. The film was immediately screened in front of a test audience, and as David told us, it did not live up to expectations. "It didn't test well..." At this point, Holland was asked to step away from the project, and Kirschner brought in a new set of editors to "cut the film down." According to David, there was about a half an hour of material excised from Holland's original cut, most of which consisted of sequences he had shot with Chucky.

When it came time to release *Child's Play*, United Artists was in a financial crisis and was falling apart at the seams. They weren't even willing to throw it an official premiere, so Kirschner decided to go against their wishes and staged one himself, at "The Motion Picture Academy" on Wilshire Boulevard in L.A. In an attempt to establish a "buzz" at the event, he stacked up Good Guy dolls outside, creating a wall on both sides of the entrance way. "It very much felt like the Twilight Zone," he told us. The stunt drew lots of attention, and the event solidified the feeling that they were dealing with something special.



The original 1997 US one-sheet for *Child's Play 3*

seems more than pleased. "Thrilled," Holland told us when asked what he thought of the outcome. "I'm very proud of the movie." The original writer, Don Mancini, despite the fact that the final version was very different from his original concept, was more than happy. "I was still very excited about it," he said. "It was my first movie, and I understood that virtually all scripts go through the process where they get changed. I still sort of felt like my version was better, but I think Tom Holland did a really good job directing the film." Brad Douf too, was glad he had lent his voice to the project. "I thought the original film was a pretty scary little horror film," he said. "I loved it." Producer David Kirschner recalls the experience of seeing the final cut with an audience: "I was very excited by it. I sat with an audience, and people were screaming. My wife and I saw it in Times Square with a New York audience, and we just looked at each other, and were just watching the audience go crazy, talking

to the screen. It gave me chills."

Child's Play opened on November 9th, 1988, and eventually reached #4 at the box office. On its first weekend, the film made roughly \$6.5 million, and it went on to make \$44 million worldwide. The picture was by no means a run away hit, but what it did manage to accomplish was to successfully deliver a new horror icon into the world. And although the film ends with an incredulous Catherine Hicks gunning down a fire-chained Chucky, everyone had a feeling that there were sequels in the killer doll's future.

Sorry Jack... Chucky's Back! *Child's Play 2*

By the time *Child's Play* had descended on multiplexes in November of 1988, sequel talk had already begun. With the financial success of the first film, producer David Kirschner was excited to get production on a sequel under way. David had



When asked their opinion of the finished work, everyone involved. Left: Original McFarlane corded figure of Chucky; "Bride" boxed set with Tiffany and 12" Chucky (shown above right).



Above: Original "Little Big Head" figures of Chucky and Tiffany by Sideshow Collectibles. Left: Bride. Original comic series for all three *Child's Play* films by Innovation (including a TBS for 2).





Shown on top of pages 32 and 33: Various Halloween masks based on Chucky from *Bride of Chucky* and *Sin of Chucky*, by Illusion Concepts, Paper Magic Group and the Something Studios

formed a close friendship with the original writer, Don Mancini, during post production on the original *Child's Play*. They had become friends when David invited Don to sit in with him during the long editing sessions, and as Don explained to us, used him as a bit of a "sounding board." Having built up a friendship as well as confidence in his artistic ability, David asked Don if he would be interested in penning a sequel. The answer was a resounding "yes."

The only problem was that, at the time, United Artists was in the process of being sold to an Australian business man, Giancarlo Parretti. The deal eventually led to the death of United Artists, with fraud charges brought against Parretti. What it meant at the time for the series, however, was that sequel talks stalled. Apparently Parretti was more interested in making family-friendly animated movies, and a movie about a killer doll just didn't fit into his plans. In another amazing twist of fate, the people at United Artists handed David the rights to the series for free (before the sale took place), as a gesture of good faith. The fate of the series now lied in David's hands.

Acting on a suggestion from old friend Stephen Spielberg, David first went to Universal Studios with the sequel.

Rewarding them for the work they had done with his first film, *An American Tail*, Universal, which was one of many companies interested in creating a series with *Child's Play*, agreed to David's list of demands for the film, which he states were, "beyond my wildest dreams." With a production house and budget in place, it now became time to fill in the other roles.



David decided that when it came to choosing a director, he would honor an old friend, John Lafia, who wrote one of the drafts of the original film, was brought in to direct the second. "I felt he deserved it," David said. "He had such a large part in creating the first movie, I wanted him to get a shot to direct this one." Since the movie once again centered on the character of Andy, child actor Alex Vincent was the only on-screen actor to return for the sequel.

Rounding out the cast were Jenny Aguilera (An American Werewolf in London) and Gerri Graham (Phantom of the Paradise) as Andy's foster parents, with Christine Elise (Body Snatchers), as Kyle; Andy's foster sister and confidante.

The story focuses on a now eight-year-old Andy, who has been placed in a foster home after his mother was forced to undergo psychiatric testing (due to her insistence that a living doll tried to murder her). Also staying in the foster home is a teenage girl by the name of Kyle, a troubled teen who has bounced around in the foster system for most of her life. As the movie begins, we see that an executive at the company responsible for the Good Guy doll is attempting to resurrect the boy's reputation.



The original 1998 US one-sheet for *Bride of Chucky*

Chucky Gets Lucky.

Having obtained the doll from the first film, he attempts to have it cleaned up and rebuilt. While doing so, an electrical accident causes the death of a lab technician, and presumably, reanimates Chucky. After a murder and a car-jacking, Chucky manages to track down Andy at his new foster home, where Andy is already having trouble fitting in. Things soon get worse for Andy as he gradually becomes aware that Chucky has returned, and his insistence that the killer doll is back begins to strain the already-rocky relationship with his new family. Predictably, the familiar pattern of people dying around Andy once again takes center stage.

The sequel plays out much like the original film. Most of the first two acts consist of Andy having run-ins with Chucky, people not believing him, and Chucky killing people. Despite the familiar territory, *Child's Play 2* does many of the things that a sequel should. It's bigger, louder, more over the top and most of all, has more of its villain. Following in the footsteps of Freddy Krueger (who Mancini concedes inspired Chucky's personality), *Child's Play 2* features an abundance of one-liners, most of which are delivered immediately after Chucky has killed someone. Although time has passed

Mancini to the final product, he concedes that upon its completion he felt that the first sequel was, "awesome." Many fans would be inclined to agree. The finale in particular, which shows Chucky stalking Andy and Kyle in the massive Good Guy doll factory, stands out as one of the more successful set pieces in the history of the franchise.

Apparently American moviegoers in 1990 agreed, because *Child's Play 2* (with the great tagline, "Sorry Jack, Chucky's Back!") opened on November 9th, and went straight to #1 at the box office. The film made \$10 million in its opening weekend, and went on to gross another \$25 million worldwide. Had there been any doubts about Chucky's iconic status, his commanding performance that weekend had silenced the critics.



Look who's stalking! *Child's Play 3*.

If the sequel process for *Child's Play 2* could be described as "fast," then the script-to-screen journey for the third film in the series would have to be described as "breakneck." Universal wanted a sequel right away, and in less than nine months, David and Don were asked to come up with an idea, write a script, cast, shoot, edit and release. One has to wonder how much thought was put into the decision, considering that the history of these types of "fast tracks" are less than stellar.

With limited time to write, Don made a crucial decision. "I felt we needed to age the Andy character," he said, "because we had already done the same film twice, and I felt like him going after this little kid was getting a little bit old." To achieve the goal of



Shown on this page: Sideshow Collectibles bobble head and plush *Child's Play*/*Bride of Chucky* dolls; promotional cast of *Child's Play 3* trading cards and claw machine dolls

REMEMBERING CHILD'S PLAY



Shown here (and to the right) are a number of "Seed" promo items, including a Vote Chucky button, cardboard mask, sponge sperm, condoms and Vote Chucky flyer!



aging the character, young television actor Justin Whalin was cast in the role of a grown-up Andy. The role of Tyler, a youngster who Andy watches out for in the film, went to nine-year-old actor Jeremy Sylvers. There were several other characters in the ensemble cast, including Penney Reeves, who plays Andy's love interest in the movie. Also of note to horror fans: Andrew Robinson, who plays Larry Cotton in the original *Heelraiser* (1987), appears in a cameo as a twisted barber.

In Don's story, a teenage Andy is forced to attend a military academy, where he runs into Tyler, a younger recruit. As we see in the opening scene, the greedy executives at the Good Guy Company have once again decided it was time to resurrect the toy's image (after eight years), and have fired-up their factory. Chucky, reduced to a melted pile of plastic at the end of the previous entry, is thrown into a vat of liquid rubber and comes out on the other side, revitalized and ready for action. Once again, Chucky shows his masterful navigation skills as he ends up right on Andy's doorstep at the military academy. Since Tyler is the first person to discover Chucky's secret, he is now able to focus on him as a new recipient for his soul. Andy, (finally) realizing it's not smart to tell people that a killer doll is on the loose, decides instead to try and deal with the problem himself. Things are hampered by a no-nonsense Colonel, a budding love interest, and Cadet Lt. Col. Shelton, a vindictive officer with his sights set on making Andy's life a living hell.

The film, although considered by many to be the weakest of the series, is not without merit. The decision to set it at a military academy could be considered inspired, and lends itself to several clever sequences. In the final act, Chucky gets into some mischief by switching out paint ammunition (designed for a practice exercise) with real bullets in the cadet's weapons. The resulting chaos and carnage are by far the most interesting moments that the film has to offer. At the very end of the movie, we see Chucky and Andy fighting on top of a fake mountain inside of a carnival fun-house. The scene ends with Chucky being blasted with a revolver,

and falling backwards into a giant fan. The fan slices the pink-skinned killer into a hundred pieces.

Directed by veteran television director Jack Bender, the film was released on August 30th, 1991, to less than stellar reviews from both critics and horror fans alike. The worldwide take for *Child's Play 3* was only \$20 million, the lowest of the series, and for some it signaled an end to the plastic madman. "It was too fast," says Mancini. "After that film, everyone had the feeling that Chucky needed to take a break for a while."

Mainstream reviewers have never been kind to the *Child's Play* films, but they were especially brutal with Part 3. Richard Harrington of *The Washington Post* referred to the film as "DOA," and essentially called for the demise of the series. He



The original 2004 U.S. one-sheet for *Seed of Chucky*



goes on to say, "Slow, stupid and cheap, it effectively kills off any reason for *Child's Play 4*." That wouldn't be the end of the problems the film faced.

Child's Play 3 became infamous after it was claimed, during the trial of UK child murderers Jon Venables and Robert Thompson, that the film had inspired the two young children to carry out the brutal murder of three-year-old toddler James Bulger. After abducting the child in a public place, they led him to the woods, beat him to death and left him on a set of train tracks. The murder shocked the British public as well as the world, mainly because of the brutal nature of the crime and the startlingly young age of the assailants. At one point in time, the film had created such hysteria that it had been removed from video shelves in both the UK

and Ireland, although the connection eventually proved to have been totally erroneous. Both of the boys had difficult home lives as well as a history of harming small animals. In the end, it turned out to be just another case of the public seeking a scapegoat for a crime too gruesome for them to comprehend.

Despite the controversy and the ultimate failure of the movie, everyone seemed to have an inkling that Chucky would someday return. "I think even then, we kind of knew that the character had been embraced by pop culture," Don told us. "Living here in Los Angeles, on Halloween I go to Santa Monica Boulevard, and I always see people dressed up as Chucky. I think that we knew he could always be brought back every few years and remixed in a new kind of way. So, we figured it was only a matter of time."

Chucky Goes Pop.

From the very beginning of the *Child's Play* franchise, Chucky was destined to become a part of pop-culture. The Cabbage Patch Kid/My Buddy Doll carrying-kid public was already connected to the character, whether they liked it or not, and the only thing needed to cement this fact was a three-dimensional collectible fans could take home as their own. The first film resulted in an aggressive video store release which included new advertising material which now fully utilized the look of Chucky - and one highly sought-after collectible: the promotional Chucky doll (complete with suction-cup hands). This doll was released with the *Child's Play* logo on his chest and later re-released with the logos of both sequels (and made available via Spencer's Gifts). Video Stores received and displayed this doll, adding to the demand of Chucky-inspired



Shown on this page: Two 18" scale Chucky dolls released by Silverstone Collectibles; a 12" scale Chucky from NECA and Cull Classic scale figures of Chucky (single and boxed), Glen and Tiffany



merchandise. Eventually, a slew of companies began releasing Chucky dolls - mostly made available in claw-machines at local arcades and at Spencer's mall stores. A couple Chucky Halloween masks have also been available over the years, during the haunting season. Throughout the years, these have been the most collected of the Chucky merchandise, and still stands today as a very lucrative toy product. During the original trilogy releases, only a few other materials surrounding the film saw light of day. A series of comic books by Innovation and a promotional trading card series (based on the third film) are among the highlights. When *Child's Play 3* bombed theatrically, the character soon disappeared from the viewing public's sight... until 1998 that is.

Chucky Gets Lucky. *The Bride of Chucky.*

During the 1990s, horror movies changed. As *A Nightmare on Elm Street* and the *Friday* 13th films progressed, horror movies became more self-referential. Then came the movie that changed it all. Screen. Now all the old rules went out the door, as horror movies could be darkly funny and scary, yet bring the audience along for the ride with a sly wink and a smile. When *Child's Play 3* came out, the horror boom of the '80s was already trailing off. Don Mancini says of this period, "The horror genre was kind of in the doldrums for a while until '96, and when *Scream* came out, it just made this huge impact on popular culture. Suddenly everyone was saying, 'Okay, what horror movies can we make?' Universal realized that they owned this very popular character, and decided to reinvent it. David and I had already talked about this idea of doing it as a full-on comedy, and that really worked well with what was going on in the horror genre at that time. *Scream* had

that kind of tongue-in-cheek, very self-conscious approach, it sort of dove tailing nicely with what David and I had already wanted to do with Chucky."

In fact, there wasn't even a script until after *Scream* was released. Don Mancini and company came back together to revive one of the '80s' biggest hits, who just happened to be one of the shortest slashers to stalk across the screen. The script was written to capitalize on what was going on in a world that had been deprived of this little foul mouthed Good Guy doll. "I put together a story, and I pitched it to David and his partner, Corey Siegel," Don explains. "They gave me their notes, and I went back and pitched it again. We always liked to have visual aids for these pitches, but we literally went out and bought a female doll, and altered it slightly to conform to the way I described Tiffany in my pitch. We built a little 'hoopie' in the Jewish religion... it's almost like a little altar, a little bridal altar. We had the dolls on them, and brought them to Universal when I did the pitch. They liked it a lot and decided to do it."

Bride showed a funnier and romantic side to Chucky that hadn't been picked up on before. Black comedy was the rule of the day, as the love interest from Chucky's past was introduced, a female killer whose attitude and bloodlust potentially rivaled Chucky's own. Tiffany. She was a beautiful blonde

bombshell who was in love with Charles Lee Ray before he became a demented doll. Tiffany eventually becomes "doffied" herself, after understanding her pint-sized partner. The same voodoo that turned Charles Lee Ray into Chucky was used against "Tiff" during a memorable bath-sequence that gives homage to *Bride of Frankenstein*, and birth to one of the few female movie marauders. "I was really influenced by *Bride of Frankenstein*, and not the *Elsa Lanchester* character Tiffany is like *Frankenstein's Monster* in the way that she is a monster, but she has a very sweet heart, which is funny. The idea is that she's romantic, when I wrote it I had Jennifer Tilly in mind from the very beginning." This romantic new character set out on a road trip with her ex-lover in an attempt to transfer their souls into new bodies - that of a young pair of "Romeo and Juliet" lovers played by Katherine Heigl (pre-*Knocked Up*) and Nick Stabile. While on a road trip, the couple is running from Heigl's on-screen cop-father (John Ritter, in a striking performance), and toting the tag-along demented duo of dolls.

Jennifer Tilly herself was already an Oscar winning actress at the time the film was made, having won the award for her performance in Woody Allen's *Bullets Over Broadway*. "When they approached me to do it," Tilly explained to us, "Don Mancini said he heard my voice when he was writing the part, and I thought... 'well, that's a little scary.' I didn't really know anything about Chucky, I wasn't really a horror movie aficionado, and I sort of had this idea that when you do a horror movie, it's just kind of slumming."

She adds, "It's just sort of an idea that people have who haven't really seen horror movies. Also I was thinking I don't want to play opposite a doll, that's like... you know, a come down for me." She laughs. "They kept just sending me the script and saying 'Come on, just please read it.' I had dated a guy that was just obsessed with the Hong Kong films. I used to go and watch them, and noticed just how sort of weirdly beautiful they were... so surreal. They are always obsessed with fairy tales and the supernatural, and have beautiful cinematography. So when they said Ronny Yu was going to direct it, I thought 'That's really interesting, Ronny Yu is going to direct a Chucky film?'" He did this amazing movie called *The Bride with White Hair*. Also I really liked the idea that Don thought of me for the character, and really wanted me." She continues, "I thought that was interesting because when people want me, usually they have a bit of a skewed sensibility to them; I'm not usually the first person that comes to mind for anything. I read the script, and I couldn't believe how funny and clever and literate it was. So I took a meeting with the producer, and he told me about all they wanted to do with the film. A friend of mine said 'Jennifer, you should do it, it'll be really great to have a franchise.' I was like, 'I'm just going to be in this one because Jennifer dies.'"

Poor Jennifer didn't realize that no one ever really dies in a horror movie, but she quickly learned that golden rule. "Now I know the only way to kill Chucky for good, is bad boxoffice, and I don't think that's ever going to happen." She says laughing, "I decided to do it. I was just struck by the humor, how well written the script was, and the fact that Ronny Yu was directing it was the cherry on the cake. Actually, Peter Pau, who did the cinematography, also went on to win an Oscar for *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*."

Shown on this page: Spencer's Gifts exclusive dolls, new plush releases from Selezione Collectibles, plus Hawthorne Village Chucky (Toy Store) and Tiffany (Trader) installments

REMEMBERING CHILD'S PLAY



A variety of Japanese-produced Chucky dolls, released over the past five years, featuring the "Chucky" and associated "Good Guy" dolls, in various scales and quality.

While on set, Jennifer added her own sense of style to the film, "A lot of the stuff I wore in the movie was my own. I had just done a character in another movie that was really punk. So I decided to put all these long electric blue and purple hair extensions in, and be really Goth. But with Tiffany, they showed me the doll, and she was all complete, right down to the Chucky tattoo on her bosom; so they had the challenge of making me look like the doll. I was grumbling a little bit: 'Why didn't you cast me, and then make the doll look like me? Why do I have to look like the doll?'" She laughs, "Ronny would laugh at everything I did." She says, "When I was putting the doll together, I had the eyeball and I said 'why don't I put the eyeball in my mouth?'" I thought it would be very Daalquesque for me to open up, and have the eyeball in my mouth, if for no other reason than Tiffany was fucking with Chucky and having a good time."

With a great script and a well respected director at the helm, *Bride of Chucky* took off. One of the more successful films in the franchise, it referenced back to many of Chucky's contemporaries. Watch closely in the film's first scenes at the police station where Chucky's remains are held, and you'll see Freddy Krueger's glove in one of the evidence lockers, as well as Jason Voorhees' mask, and Michael Myers' mask. The movie was also one of the first to show, well... doll-on-doll sex. Touted on



the film's poster (which was a nod to the *Scream* movies in its design), Chucky did in fact get lucky. Brad Douf was surprised when he saw what was to become one of the more bizarre and hilarious scenes in the film. "When I first saw that, I was SHOCKED." He says, "I'm not shocked by sex scenes at all, but somehow those two dolls having sex, I just thought it was absolutely disgusting. I didn't know where to look." He laughs, "I really was sort of embarrassed, but I thought it was really cool. I mean, it's one thing to read something on a page, but when

we're looking at each other in these glass booths. We could overlap, which is why I think the relationship between the dolls is really strong. I was actually looking at him while I was acting, and I would actually adlib things, and he'd adlib right back at me cause he's a great Oscar nominated actor also. The scene where Tiffany died, he's looking at me and I'm looking at him, and he's crying. He's got tears rolling down his face. I guess Chucky felt so bad because he had to kill Tiffany." She says, "But I think that the two characters really do have this love/hate relationship. That was amazing because I got to react off of what he did."

Douf's experience on *Bride* was similar. "Yeah, there's a huge difference between when I did the other films and when I did *Bride*." He says, "I'd done three of them, and in two of them, the way I worked was I would go into the studio and do the whole movie in a day and a half. But I was alone in a room by myself, and sometimes it was like a really big room, and after a while I'd feel really lost. There was no movie to watch, and there I was doing the whole thing in my head. It was kind of a lonely experience," he explains, "so it was delightful to do it with Jennifer. I was so happy to see her. Jennifer really knows how to talk. We came up with some good stuff. A couple

two dolls that are two icons are actually having sex... you know, dolls aren't supposed to do that." He jokes, "Of course they did... you know Barbie was a whore. It was ridiculous what was going on with those dolls. You can imagine. Well, Chucky would definitely do that." laughs Douf.



Shown on this page: An assortment of odds and ends from the *Child's Play* series, including key-chains (from Japan), coin bank, coin purse and talking, animated Halloween doll.



of scenes that we did were almost completely adlibbed, and they made it into the movie. Chucky's always emotional when he dies, and when I'm in the presence of that kind of talent [Tilly], I'm not going to hold back.

Bride of Chucky's tale of two different sets of lovers; one pair young and hopeful, the other psychotic and angry, went on to cult status. The popularity of the Tiffany character boomed, and the ending of the film left more than a little room for a sequel, with Chucky's demon spawn being born in a gory display. It took another six years before we found out exactly what was born.

The Second Coming. Seed of Chucky.

Seed of Chucky was released in 2004, taking the film's self-awareness to the next level. A movie was being made about the "Chucky" murders, and it had Jennifer Tilly playing... Jennifer Tilly. Seed was a no-holds-barred black humor-bloodfest, adding the newest member of the family: Glen, Chucky and Tiffany's son.

Named for the character in Ed Wood's classic *Glen or Glenda*, Glen (played by Lord of the Ring's Billy Boyd) had some sexual identity issues that developed throughout this new installment. The movie revolved around the two as they attempted to find new hosts for their souls, to finally make the "Lee Ray" family whole. A problem arises as Chucky soon comes to the conclusion that family life is far more scarier than any of the horrors he has been responsible for.

Tilly was back, doing double duty, playing as Tiffany and herself in the film. "After *Bride* came out, I got to be really good friends with Don Mancini, who directed *Seed of Chucky*, and he's written every single Chucky movie since the beginning of time," Tilly explains. "*Bride of Chucky* was really successful, and it had a really huge gay audience. I think it was the first Chucky movie to have a gay following. Part of it was, there's a really positive gay character in it [played by Gordon Michael Woolvett]; the friend of the lovers that gets killed. Also, I have a big gay audience, and I think it's because I'm so campy, but also I've done a lot of gay-friendly films. Once that community found the Chucky movies, they were like 'oh my gawd, these are so great.' I don't even want to tell you on Hollywood Boulevard how many drag queen Tiffanys there were."

"Anyhow, [Don] thought the reason why *Bride of Chucky* was so successful was me. Right after we got through with the last Chucky movie, they

were ready to go for the next one, and then *Columbine* happened, and then it was like 'Oh horror movies!' but *Columbine* had nothing to do with Chucky. So so we could go once a week and see movies, and then afterward we'd get drinks, and throw around ideas for the new Chucky movie. He wanted to have me in this one in some way other than the doll, so that's how we came up with the idea of the film within the film. It was really a labor of love." Tilly continues, "When he got through with the first draft, and I was like 'Oh you're going to have me playing myself, then you have to make me the bitchy diva from hell,' then we sent it to the studio. They said it was too funny, and too gay, and there was too much Jennifer Tilly. We looked at each other, and were like 'How can there be too much Jennifer Tilly?' The studio wanted my character to be somebody whose friends were dying off... sort of your bland, generic horror movie. So [Don] did love me down a lot, but I'm still pretty campy in that." She laughs.

"I wanted to find a way to bring Jennifer back because we had such a great time working with her on *Bride*," Mancini tells us, "She's only in the movie physically for half an hour, and then it's just a vocal performance, but we had such a great time working with her, and she's such a great actress and comedienne, that I just really wanted to find a way to bring her back, and so that's when I thought of setting it in Hollywood, and having her play two roles, Tiffany as well as herself. Obviously, I was influenced a little bit by Wes Craven's *New Nightmare*, where [Wes Craven] did that. At the same time, I was also really influenced by *I Love Lucy*," he laughs, "and the episodes where the characters go to Hollywood, and the fictional characters are constantly bumping into real life celebrities playing themselves. I always loved that as a kid, and that's part of what I wanted to do with *Seed*. There's even a little bit of *Lucy Ricardo* in Tiffany in that movie, in that she's like star struck by Jennifer Tilly. So it was a little bit *New Nightmare* and a little bit *I Love Lucy*."

"We could have had the three doll characters, and then basically done a repeat of *Bride*, where the human characters they are interacting with are kind of these straight forward fictional characters," Mancini explains, "But I felt like we had already made that movie, and I felt like it would just be a retread of *Bride*. I felt that one of the reasons *Bride* was so successful was that it represented such a radical left turn from where the series had been,



Unreleased publicity photo featuring Tilly and Glen



Shown on this page: A Medicom vinyl-up figure. Sideways's 1:1 scale Seed of Chucky doll. NECA Headknockers and the entire run of Devil's Due Publishing Chucky comic books (and Hack/Slash cross-over)

and so with *Seed* I wanted to continue in the comedy vein, but I felt like we needed to do something crazy to make it be yet another left turn. So that's where the idea of setting it in Hollywood, and having a film within a film, and having celebrities playing themselves came from. It was an attempt to do something different."

Different sometimes doesn't mean success, however, as *Seed of Chucky* was released to theaters on November 12, 2004, the \$12 million budgeted film managed to open for a meager \$8.8 million (via Universal's sister-brand, Rogue Pictures). The movie eventually earned its money back theatrically, but the damage to the core fanbase was done. The film earned nearly half of its predecessor's boxoffice take, and the reviews were very unflattering. The public seemed to agree with Universal management - that the film did indeed host "too much Tilly" and the excessive emphasis on secondary characters (such as Redman and John Waters) took away from a very important fact. This was Chucky's film series! Not surprisingly, even the mass media took turns picking on the new installment. Kevin Thomas of the *LA Times* claimed the film to give "a tip of the hat to Ed Wood's 1953 *Glen or Glenda*, a masterpiece in comparison to this cheesy druck." Regardless of the reviews, the film managed to find its audience eventually (with help from home video of course), and the licensing giant that the title is attached with made fans forget (for the most part) any problems they had with the new installment.

"That movie had a very mixed reception, but I think in the three years since it's been out, from my observations, it's kind of developed a bit of a cult following." Mancini goes on, "Even here in LA, the American Cinematheque, which is a pretty cool and important organization, had a screening of it this past Halloween at their 'Outfest' screenings, which is their LA Gay and Lesbian film festival. I still look at that movie and it makes me laugh. I'm proud of both *Bride* and *Seed*."

They're not your run-of-the-mill slasher horror sequels," Mancini says, "Even if you don't like them, and there are plenty of people who didn't like *Seed*, you have to admit that it's not typical. It's not another retread, and we were definitely trying to do something different, and I'm proud of that fact."

Tilly's performance in these final two installments added a new female icon to the horror genre. "I love it," Tilly says of her character. "I love that Tiffany is an iconic character. Everywhere I go people give me dolls and things to sign. It had such an impact in people's minds. I go to places where people don't even speak English, and they'll point to me and scream, and they'll want to hug me because I'm *Bride of Chucky*, and I think it's amazing. I think that the next Chucky, from what Don has told me, is going to be a remake of the original. So there's no job for Tiffany there. Which is genius, to see the original remake because people love Chucky

so much. They are going to go back to Chucky being a horrifying little banshee as opposed to a middle-aged guy with wife and kid problems."

On top of this proposed remake, it was revealed to *HorrorHound*, while working on this retrospective, that MGM does in fact have plans to release a long-awaited twentieth anniversary special edition DVD of the original horror classic. Many of the people involved in this article have already recorded special material for the disc, which is scheduled for release this fall.

Chucky, Tiffany and Glen Go Pop.

All it took was for one more hit film to bring the licensing giant known as *Child's Play* to life! Just one year after *Bride of Chucky* delighted audiences, McFarlane Toys introduced Chucky into their highly-popular Movie Maniacs action figure line, as both a single-figure release, and box set (accompanied by Tiffany). A 12" version of the McFarlane figure hit stores two years later. In the early 2000s, Sideways Collectibles stepped in with a series of *Child's Play* (and *Bride of Chucky*) inspired dolls and collectibles (including key chains and mini-figures). The most interesting aspect of the *Child's Play* merchandise is that of the licensing

MGM now holds the original film rights for the series, while Universal carries all sequel licensing rights. Due to this, licensors have always purchased said rights from Universal, making original-tagged *Child's Play* merchandise nearly non-existent. In the years since that initial McFarlane figure release, we have seen a multitude of dolls (large, small, talking and non-talking) released in Japan (via such companies as Dream Rush, Mike Company and Medicom) and US retail giant Spencer's Gifts (who have always reserved shelf space in their stores for Chucky). NECA Toys recently acquired the rights to the series, releasing figure versions of Chucky, Tiffany and even Glen. Glen himself has seen a limited amount of merchandising - via a

Spencer's Gifts large-scale doll and a rare squish toy found at various drug stores. New masks and costumes, plus a comic book series from Devil's Due are just a few examples of the impact Chucky and his family have had on today's consumers, and with this mass-amount of licensed merchandise, the before-mentioned remake talk, consistent DVD releases of the entire five-film series and the exciting news behind the proposed special edition disc on the horizon - it seems that you truly can't keep a "Good Guy" down.



Shown on this page: SEGA released plush Chucky dolls (regular and dancing) and black & white style action figures (shown below). Also seen are the Medicom-produced Kotenok Good Guy figures, unlicensed statue, Japanese import Chucky and Tiffany dolls and metal keychains.



Child's Play 1-3 written by Eric Newell. *Bride* and *Seed* written by Jessica Dwyer. "Chucky goes pop" and "Chucky, Tiffany and Glen go pop" written by Nathan Hanemann. A very special thanks to Douglas Deputy and everyone else who helped produce this article, including Larry New, Kevin Miller, Travis Follgate, Sean Clark and Nicole Falk.

MICHAEL MYERS COMES HOME... AGAIN!

This spring, Devil's Due releases a comic series starring Michael Myers entitled *Halloween: Nightdance*. To launch the title, they are producing a massive five-cover premiere! The covers will feature art by series artist Tim Seeley, a parried cover by Bill Sienkiewicz, a parried cover by Crash Cunningham, a glow-in-the-dark parried cover by Crash and a sketch cover by Bill Sienkiewicz (as an extremely limited retailer incentive). We had a chance to talk with newswriter and cover artist Crash Cunningham on how he became involved with Devil's Due Publishing and his first foray into horror comics with this new *Halloween* limited series.

Crash Cunningham I was contacted by Steve Caltaruzzi through the old *Findlay* 13th message board. He had a big part in the *Halloween: 25 Years* documentary and worked closely with the writer and director, Stefan Hutchinson. He and Stef had both seen some Jason sketches and illustrations I had posted and were interested in seeing more. Stef had just begun writing *Nightdance* and was looking for some art to help the project along. I did some Myers sketches for them and they were really pleased. This was before Devil's Due was involved. A few months later Stef presented my work to Malek Akkad of the *Halloween* franchise and he really dug it, that was right about the time Akkad and Devil's Due agreed on publishing the comics. From that point, they had a really good thing going and was bringing in top names like Seeley, Sienkiewicz, Tompkins and others to provide the interior (Seeley) and covers. Stef really pushed to get me involved in there as well. They gave me a chance at producing covers right alongside of them. I really owe it to Stef for hanging in there and pushing my art and "DD," of course, for taking the chance at bringing a newswriter into the mix. I mean this wasn't like a small project to get my foot in the door... this was *Halloween*! So in an odd way, I began working with Michael Myers because of Jason Voorhees.

Ash (*Evil Dead*, *Army of Darkness*) seems to be a busy comic book character these days. Along with his continuing series via Dynamite, he is about to team-up with another Slim Raimi creation known as Xena: Warrior Princess. Over at Dark Horse, we are seeing a new (and amazing) adaptation of the original *Evil Dead* story! And over at Wildstorm, Ash continues his fight against New Line Cinema's Freddy and Jason. Now if we could just get Ash to show up in a new movie...



Shown below is a mass collection of horror comics ranging from the conclusion to the Devil's Due *Chucky* max, the continuation of *zombies* and *Marvel Zombies*, plus new and ongoing titles such as *The Living Corpse*, *Living with the Dead* and *Marvel's The Zombie*!



ARTIST SPOTLIGHT:

The Art of Ray Sanoleri

In every issue of *HorrorHound* we present a series of articles that showcase all of the hottest new action figure and horror movie merchandise that we can find! Classic movie monsters, modern day classics - they are consistently being produced as action figures, model kits, busts, statues and masks - but most people never know anything about what went into making these iconic collectibles. This issue, we present a special look and interview with one of the most talented artists in the industry - working seven days a week to help bring us *HorrorHounds* something special in the way of sculpture. You may have seen his work at retail, or actually have some of his pieces in your collection and never knew where it truly came from: It is the art of Ray Sanoleri!

HorrorHound: So, the common question that needs to be asked... How did you get into sculpting for the toy industry?

Ray Sanoleri: It wasn't something that I had planned on doing. I went to college for commercial art and worked as a graphic artist and illustrator, but I wasn't satisfied and I wanted to do something else. I have always been a monster movie fan, so I found magazines on make-up artists. I had done a lot of that when I was a kid... so I thought 'let me try it.' So I went to school for make-up, and I had to learn how to sculpt. I had never really done anything three-dimensional up until that point, so as I worked as a make-up artist, I realized I liked the sculpting more than putting make-up on actors. When I was looking for work as a make-up artist, I started playing around and making little busts. I always enjoyed doing portrait work. When I drew, I always enjoyed doing heads of people, and one thing led to another. The busts opened doors, I got to

know some of the people in the kit industry thanks to my Frankenstein bust and Mummy bust, then I started foiling around, sculpting smaller-scale heads and then I just happened to run into some people who worked at McFarlane

Toys at a show in Kentucky (WonderFest), and they liked my portfolio. Since I lived in New Jersey, and they were based in New Jersey, one thing led to another, and I ended up working for them for awhile. I had no background working in the toy industry or anything like that, but

fortunately I was able to pick up what they were showing me. They were good enough to teach me all aspects. I didn't start out as a sculptor. At first I was just making certain parts to a figure, then I learned how to paint, mold and cast, then eventually they gave me a figure to make. The Blair Monster (*The Thing*) was the first figure that I made completely on my own.

HH: Tell us a little about your work in the make-up industry, leading up to your job as a sculptor.

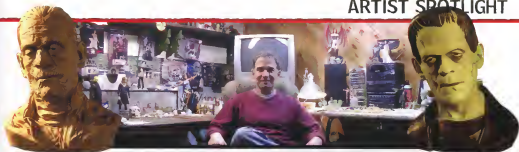
RS: I went to make-up school in Orlando. The first job I had was in Universal Studios down there, and I was actually making up the monsters! They had a Beetlejuice Graveyard revue that featured all of the original monsters, as they are all Universal properties. There was some prosthetics work, I did some masks, but for the most part it was just painting stuff on. It was my first gig, and I was doing the Universal Monsters! I then came back up north, as I am from New Jersey, and I started banging on doors in New York when I got into NBC. I started working on *Saturday Night Live* for two years, I did two seasons there, plus I did make-up for some other shows on NBC, some new shows and talk shows, and then from there I wanted to go out to California. That was very difficult, so that's when I started playing around with sculpting.

HH: At what point in your make-up career did you officially start producing model and resin kits, thus initiating your sculpting career?

RS: I started working on SNL in 1995, and I did my first little Frankenstein bust immediately after that, I did another one. It was at that time that I got to know Dick Smith, and started taking his make-up course, and I got some guidance from him. My second bust was the Frankenstein bust [shown in this article] which was sold for awhile. This was all over a period of about two years.

HH: Were there any important pieces that you did prior to toy-making?





ing that stands out as important or key pieces in your career?

RS: I remember when I did arrive in California, after working on SNL, I had met a make-up artist out there who was a big model fan. He was a pretty well known artist out there, but he was also a collector. He had a lot of monster kits and everything like that. There was a model that was done as Frankenstein where he was chained to a chair, from *Bride of Frankenstein*, and he wanted a better head. So, he asked me if I could do a scaled-head as a custom piece for him. He really liked the Frankenstein bust that I did, so that was the first time I did anything in that small of a scale. From there I started making miniature busts for myself, such as Frankenstein and Dracula and when I did the Blair Monster for McFarlane Toys I started making myself a 12" figure of Dracula.

HH: It is said that you have done some approved work in the past on Boris Karloff via his daughter Sarah. Can you tell us about that?

RS: I met Sarah at a Chiller convention back when I was still working at NBC, and we soon became friends. I drew all of my life, and I always liked Boris Karloff. There were a lot of drawings I had done of him, so I went there with a friend of mine, and he showed her some of my drawings, and she really liked them. We have been friends ever since. She and her husband are really nice people, and they have been very gracious. When I am in California, I always visit them, when they come to Chiller, I spend the day with them... I have done some paintings and air-brushed renderings of Karloff for them. When the post office released the Universal Monster stamps in '87, me, Sarah and a friend of mine partnered up and made first-day issue envelopes. I did renderings of her father as different characters, printed them on the envelopes and stamped them. When they were released by the post office we had them cancelled. We have a lot of them left - first day issues, signed and numbered by Sarah



HH: To flash-forward again to your work with McFarlane Toys - how long did you sculpt for Todd and company, and what were some of the key pieces you created while there?

RS: I was with them almost three years. I was freelance the whole time. After the Blair Monster, they put me on their sports figures, so I really didn't do many horror items. It was really good for capturing likeness, portraits, clothing - in that regard it was a good work experience.

HH: Speaking of portraits, we have a lot of readers who are interested in the sculpting industry. Do you have any tips on capturing portraits for them?

RS: The first thing I try to tell anybody who tries to do a portrait is they have to get a good profile! There are usually plenty of shots of the character from the front, but especially today with DVDs, you need to see the profile. If you don't get the profile right, then you're not going to get the likeness! It will look good from the front, but

when you turn the head, it just doesn't look like whoever it's supposed to be. That's the first thing I always tell people. The second thing I always try to do is to take my reference photos (with a background as a graphic artist, I have a pretty good knowledge of Photoshop). Once I know what size the figure has to be, whether a 12" or 7" figure, then I measure the head. When I scan my photos in or whatever I need to do to get them in Photoshop, I shrink my photos down to the sizes of the heads that I am going to make. Then I am able to measure everything from the width of the eyes to the chin, and make sure everything is in the right spot. You can have one thing slightly off, and people will look at it and go 'yeah it looks like him, but there's something not right.' And that's what it is - something is not in the right place.

HH: When sculpting, what type of materials do you prefer?

RS: Most of what I use is caststone. For smaller figures, some of the stuff I do now is 1:1 scale (sculpted in 7" form), I use caststone that has extra waxes mixed in with it, to make it even harder. Even the



ARTIST SPOTLIGHT

hard castline that you buy isn't hard enough to do the smaller figures. Especially the heads and the hands because they are so small. I tried using sculpty when I first started sculpting, but I didn't like it, and I probably didn't know how to use it properly, but fortunately, I was introduced to castline very quickly

HH: We have never heard of mixing castline with wax. Is this something that can be purchased or something that has to be done by hand?

RS: It's something you do by hand. I think there is someone out there now who is trying to make some clays that are comparable or better than castline, but I learned to add certain waxes like beeswax and camova. Right now, I know one of the components you can't even find anymore. Once I run out of this stuff, I don't know what I'm going to do. I'm going to have to find something else to use.

HH: Do you prefer sculpting at 1:1 or is scaled-up (such as 2-up) work better for you?

RS: The 1:1 is good. When we sculpt at the larger scale, it goes to China, and is pantographed down. Depending on the factory, most of them do a good job, but sometimes with the likeness - if something is slightly off, then the likeness is off. So, when doing it 1:1 you at least know it will be molded at 1:1. When sculpting at the larger size, it's easier because it's larger, but when it's shrunk down you do lose something.

HH: Is there any aspect of the job that you find difficult or uneasy?

RS: For anyone that comes to me, and wants to get into this, that wants to learn or has artistic talent, and thinks this might be an interesting thing to do - I find the biggest problem to be the long hours and the tediousness of it. It's not

like drawing some pictures that you're going to get done in a couple hours. It takes weeks. Also when you're working on a licensed property, and for a company that has a license from a studio, then there are a few layers of approvals that you have to go through. If you're not good at taking direction, or if you're not good at letting people criticize your work, then you are going to be very unhappy. You have the actor, you have the studio, the licensor. They are all going to have different views. Sometimes that can be very frustrating. This and the long hours. They are not prepared for that.

I have been able to work as a freelance artist for the past fifteen years now, and I have found that a lot of the reasons I have been able to get work, and keep work is because I did the work! A lot of complaints I hear from companies that hire artists, whether make-up artists or illustrators or sculptors, is that people aren't reliable. They either take on too much work or they don't understand what work they are taking on, and they end up not doing the work, or having it done on time. A lot of artists also need to learn that when you do work, you are getting paid as an artist. What I do is called commercial art. You're getting paid by somebody to do what they want you to do. You have to have it done in their time. If they say 'get it done in three weeks,' then get it done in three weeks! Never call back, and say 'I'm not going to have this done,' because they are not going to call you back. That has always been the biggest complaint I have heard from people. It has helped me, not that I am better than other people, but I do the work and get it done. Being an artist, there is a passion that has to be put into your work, just like being an actor or musician, you have to have the passion for it. It takes a lot of your life. When artists did this as a child or as a hobby, they did it when they felt like it or when the mood strikes them. When you become a commercial artist, you cannot work like that or you will never make any money.

HH: Between your consistent work at McFarlane, and now sculpting for



NECA, what other companies have you worked for over the years that we may recognize?

RS: I have worked for Mezco. I'm actually doing some things for them now. There was another company I worked for, doing Presidential dolls called Talking Presidents. They were 12" dolls, and all I did was the portraits. I did those monster toys for Toy Island last year, but I did those through the Four Horsemen who was working on that license with Toy Island [editor's note: the Four Horsemen are the masterminds behind the new DC Super Hero toys by Mattel]. I originally did the [figures] in Bons Karoff's likeness. When the toys were made, I was told they were going to go "generic" so I just made the heads generic. I only did the Frankenstein and the Mummy - the other three were by other artists.

HH: To focus on NECA for a moment, how long have you been sculpting with the company, and which pieces have stood out as some of your favorites?

RS: I've been working with NECA now for at least five years. The first figure I did for them was the old man from *A Christmas Story*. Some of my favorite figures I have done for them include the two Lara Croft figures (*Tomb Raider*), more recently I have done the succubus from *Castlevania*. I did *Flyboy* from *Dawn of the Dead*. He was so fun to do, being so twisted, having the DVD I was constantly freezing the frames, and it was amazing that he was able to walk like that. I even tried to get my foot like that, but I just couldn't do it!

HH: You have mentioned that you are a horror fan, so what would you say are some of your favorite horror movies?

RS: I'm a fan of the classic horror movies. I love *Frankenstein*. That's always been my favorite. A lot of people think "The Bride" is superior to the original *Frankenstein*, but to me, I think the original was the best. So I like all of the classic movies - *Frankenstein*, *Dracula*, *The Wolf Man*... even silent stuff. I like a lot of the old silent films Lon Chaney made and the German expressionist stuff. When I was younger, I was basically a student of all of that. I got all the books and read up on those, and read up on all the actors, and how they were made, and why they were made. 🖤

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JOHN CARPENTER'S PRINCE OF DARKNESS

by **Mark Clark**

After a four year absence from the horror genre, John Carpenter came back strong in 1987 with the film *Prince of Darkness*. Shot entirely in southern California in just over thirty days with a budget of three million dollars, the film was a moderate success, but found a wider audience later on video that has given the film the cult status that it enjoys today. The film used very few locations which worked well within the production's small budget.

The movie starred the great Donald Pleasence, which was the fourth and final film he had performed in for Carpenter. However, Donald did keep the Halloween torch burning for three more non-Carpenter installments before passing away in 1995 from complications during a heart valve replacement surgery. The film also starred Jameson Parker, best known for the television series *Simon & Simon* as well as Victor Wong and Dennis Dun, who both had just worked with Carpenter on *Big Trouble in Little China*.



Mission San Fernando Rey de España, located in Mission Hills, California

Directly across the street from the park where the fountain appears is the outside of the mission where Professor Black (Victor Wong) first goes to visit Father Loomis.

The room where Professor Black and Father Loomis speak inside the mission doesn't appear to be at the mission. I dropped the four dollars and combed the place in search of this room, and found nothing like it. I showed the photos to several employees, and one of them



Victor Wong walks toward the fountain, in *Prince of Darkness*

To start things off this issue, we begin in Mission Hills, California at Mission San Fernando Rey de España. The mission was founded in September of 1797, and served in the film as the location in which Father Loomis (Donald Pleasence) resided. The mission is still open to the public for a fee of four dollars, but all of the locations used in the film can be seen for free on the outside of the mission.

The garden area and fountain where Father Loomis speaks to the other priests is located in the park right across the street from the mission.



The water fountain which appears just outside of the mission

told me they thought it may have been filmed there, but most everything in the photo appeared to be props, and not any of the relics found at the mission.

Mission San Fernando Rey de España is located at 15151 San Fernando Mission Blvd., Mission Hills, CA 91345-1109. If you would like to learn more about the mission, you can visit their website at <http://missiontour.org/sanfernando>.

Next we head over to where

John Carpenter himself went to film school, USC, the University of Southern California. This location served as the school the students attended in the film. It took me a few trips to this rather large campus to find everything, but it was well worth it.

The hallway we first see Brian Marsh (Jameson Parker) on is located in between the Hancock Foundation Building located at 3516 Trousdale Parkway and the Town and Gown Faculty Center located at 665 Exposition Blvd. This was also where he saw Catherine (Jesse Blount) and Susan (Aerie Marie Howard) talking by the fountain.

The exterior of the building that they continue to go in and out of for class was the Town and Gown Faculty Center located at 665 Exposition Blvd.

The interior used as the hallway where they travel between classes was in a completely different building on campus. This building oddly enough is the Science Hall located at 3551 Trousdale Pkwy. The classroom is in the same building, and is the Lecture Hall Room #163. The exterior of the home that Brian Marsh lives in is briefly seen in the film. I believe this location was actually in a neighborhood, right across the street from the USC campus, near the corner of Catalina Street and 36th Street.



The steps leading into the classroom of USC

The church was designated a national landmark in 1956. In 1998, it became the Union Center for the Arts, and is located at 120 Judge John Aiso Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012. For more information visit their website at <http://www.iaarbons.org/info/unioncctr.php>.

As Father Loomis enters the church, he notices the homeless people

on the street behaving strangely. The direction he is looking in is actually correct. The homeless people are standing on Judge John Aiso Street, near East Temple Street.

This is also the same spot where the homeless woman with the shopping cart appears to be praying earlier in the movie.

In the film the homeless people, led by Alice Cooper, watch the church from an alley across the street as the students load equipment into the church. This alley in reality is not across the street, and its location is currently unknown. Shown in this article, is what's really across the street,



Victor Wong turns to meet with Father Loomis at the mission

This corner appears in the very next shot as Brian looks at the sun from his porch.

There are several homes in this neighborhood that resemble the exterior of this house. The exact location of this home is unknown, and may no longer exist. There is some newer construction on 36th Street where it may have once stood.

Lastly is the grand daddy of *Prince of Darkness* locations, and that is the infamous church founded in 1922, this was originally a Japanese Union Church, and was the first Christian church built in Little Tokyo.



Interior hallways inside of the University of Southern California



The key classroom used in the film, as it now appears today.

and does actually appear in the film, near the end as the sun rises (see below).

As Father Loomis and Professor Brack enter the church through the front door, they enter the lobby of the church. This is the actual lobby of the church. As you walk in the front doors today just beyond the lobby, Father Loomis and Professor Brack walk

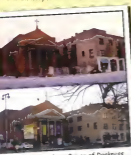
The exterior of the church, as the characters argue in the parking lot



The side of the church from the film, as it appears today with renovated fire escape.



A look within the church's main stairwell.



The iconic church from Prince of Darkness, as it appears today.

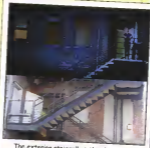
well as the interior of Brian's home were built on a set in Valencia, California.

The only interiors used inside the church were the aforementioned lobby, the stairways, and the large main room that housed all of the equipment. Everything else in the church was on a set.

The main room that held the bulk of the equipment in

through a doorway, and into what is now an art gallery called LA Artcore. If you check the gallery's website, it has the hours they are open to the public. By going to the gallery during business hours, you can legally enter the lobby of the building.

As they pass through the doorway, that is now the entrance to LA Artcore, visitors can see the of the room interiors and long hallways inside the church as



The exterior stairwell at the church has undergone some tweaks over the years

ment as well as the basement

loft was shot at an abandoned ballroom in Long Beach, California. Carpenter said that the building was quite unsafe at the time of filming. Shortly thereafter, the building was demolished. The exact location where it once stood in Long Beach is unknown.

The scene where the three men argue, and ultimately one is stabbed by a homeless woman is located in the parking lot just behind the rear of the church.

There have been a few changes made to the rear of the church.

My guess is these changes happened before it was made an historical landmark. They removed the old fire escape, and sealed the old windows and doors. You can still see where they used to be today since they only filled them with concrete.

A lot of action in the film takes place on the right side of the church in what is like a long alley way in between the church, and the building next door. There have been some changes made to this area as well. In the rear of the church, they have put in an elevator where the stairs used to lead down to this alley way. In the film, there were used to go down to this alley way at an angle, like a capital L. You would go down the stairs, and then turn right to head down the alley way. This is where Elchison (Thom Bray) finds the crucified bird. Today they have added new stairs making it a straight shot to the alley in the same direction.

If you look at the below shot, the stairs to his right are now gone, and there are now stairs behind him.

One thing that is really cool about this location is that it hasn't really changed much at all on the outside. I asked an associate of the current owner why they left the cross on top of the building, and apparently it is now protected by being an historical landmark, and it can no longer be removed. I hope you enjoyed this edition of

Horror's 'Hallowed Grounds'. For more pictures please visit my official website located at www.horrorhallowedgrounds.com. Until next time the Hunt continues!



The cityscape from the film that stands across the street of the church.



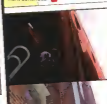
Loomis pauses outside of the church's entrance.

the film is now the LA Artcore's theater. The arch at the top of the room is hidden by the stage curtain, as are the church's windows on each side of the room hidden by drapes.

All of the footage of them going down the stairs into the base-



The terrifying alley which caused many HorrorHounds sleepless nights.



DISCLAIMER

HorrorHound does not seek to glorify the actions of serial killers or mass murderers over the course of these articles. Our only interest is in providing some insight into the public intrigue surrounding the actions of these individuals. Our goal is to provide a history of films based on serial killers as well as the influence they have had on cinema in general. Since the year 2000, several biographic style films have been released in mass numbers and frequency, based on some of the most heavily publicized serial killer cases in the United States. Some of these films leave little to the imagination while others just begin to scratch the gritty surface of these morbid true tales.

JACK THE RIPPER

There is no other name in the history of crime that is as renowned, or has been written about more than that of Jack the Ripper. The nickname, coined by the madman himself, is but the mask that helps shroud the mystery and intrigue that surrounds this killer, who terrorized the streets of London throughout the 19th century. His known victims were few, but as many serial killers have proven over the years - it only takes a minor threat to public safety to truly terrorize the masses.

The "Ripper" was reportedly responsible for only five murders, the victims being female prostitutes whose throats were cut and bodies mutilated. Internal organs were removed from some victims, which led police to believe the killer to have some type of medical background, with surgical and anatomical knowledge. Since the identity of the murderer was never found, research into the truth behind the killings has led to a mesh-mash of fact and fiction: conspiracy theories and over-analysis to the truth, the number of murders and the identity of the killer himself. What follows in this article is the basic facts surrounding the case as well as what is known about some minor theories relating to the murders themselves.

During the mid-1800s, an increase in poverty resulted in a rise of prostitution and lower-class communities within London. In early 1888, several violent murders occurred, in rapid succession and were mainly perpetrated against prostitutes in or around the Whitechapel area. Most of these said murders included deep throat slashes, mutilations to the victim's abdomen, genitals, and face, plus the removal of internal organs. Having these types of injuries in common is what linked the following list of "the canonical five" victims to the case.

The first victim of Jack the Ripper was that of Mary Ann Nichols (Walker), nicknamed "Polly." On the morning of August 31, 1888, Polly's body was discovered in the early AM on the ground outside of a stable entrance on Buck's Row (later renamed Duward Street) by one Charles Cross. Found just a couple hundred yards away from a London Hospital, Nichols was the only victim to be found on an open street. Thought at first to be a drunker or victim of petty crime, she was later discovered to have two neck slashes (cuts severing her windpipe and esophagus). She had been murdered where she was found, in her blood soaked clothing. At a local mortuary it was discovered that her abdomen had been wounded and mutilated. The abdomen featured a long, jagged knife wound, along with several other cuts on her person. Bruises were found on her lower left jaw. At the time of Polly's death, the Whitechapel area had already featured a number of recent attacks on women in the neighborhood. Speculation has always existed over whether Polly was indeed the Ripper's first victim.

Just over a week after this "first" attack, the body of a forty-seven-year-old woman by the name of Annie Chapman (aka: Dark Anne) was discovered on the

Hollywood has borrowed many key elements from these real life monsters and the murders they have committed, moving horror away from its science fiction roots and into the realm of reality. Films like *Psycho* (based on serial killer, Ed Gein) ushered in a new style of horror film. HorrorHound now needed to believe that what was happening up on the screen could really happen to them outside the theater. The evolution was inevitable with current events and an ever changing complex world. You might find yourself conflicted asking: "Am I sick for watching serial killer films?" The first television broadcast film to introduce the public to a true serial killer murder case was based on the Manson murders titled *Helter Skelter*. When *Helter Skelter* aired as a two part television mini-series, in April of 1976 on CBS, it averaged 36.4 ratings/54 share over two nights, and is the highest rated two-part made-for-TV movie ever. America's morbid fascination and curiosity was well documented on those two nights. Serial killer movies can work on many levels, some as a courtroom dramas, others as crime documentaries, and mostly as creepy horror films. Let's now look at our next article to cover these maniacs and the films about and inspired by them.



morning of September 8th, found on the ground outside of 29 Hanbury Street in Spitalfields. When found, her face had swollen, and (to many onlookers' horror) her small intestines, stomach, and other organs were lying on the outside of her body, on the ground, still attached. In a mass pool of blood, her throat was discovered to be deeply severed. Found just a couple hours after her death, she was murdered in front of a house, which hosted a number of residents who happened to hear nothing in these AM hours.

It was during this time that one John Pizer, known in London as the famous "Leather Apron" was arrested under suspicion of these murders. He had been a suspect prior to Dark Anne's death, and actually was in-hiding soon after Mary Ann Nichols's body was found (when he became a suspect). Pizer was later released, and he was not the first to be taken in for questioning, but he was no Ripper. He was neither insane nor had the medical qualifications required to do the job (according to authorities).

On September 27, 1888 a letter claiming to be Jack the Ripper (thus giving name to the murderer) was received at the Central News Office, addressed to "The Boss." The letter read:

"I have laughed when they look so clever and talk about being on the right track. That joke about Leather Apron gave me real fits. I am down on whores and I shant quit ripping them till I do get buckled. Grand work the last job was. I gave the lady no time to squeal. How can they catch me now. I love my work and want to start again. You will soon hear of me with my funny little games. I saved some proper red stuff in a ginger beer bottle over the last job to write with but it went thick like glue and I cant use it. Red ink is fit enough I hope ha ha. The next job I do I shall clip. The lady's ears off and send to the Police officers just for policy wouldn't you. Keep this letter back till I do a bit more work then give it out straight. My knife's so nice and sharp I want to get to work right away if I get a chance. Good luck

Yours truly,
Jack the Ripper"

Thought to be a hoax, the letter was never intended to be sent to the police.

On Sunday, September 30th, the Ripper struck twice in the same night. The first body was found in Dufield's Yard on Berner Street (later renamed Henriques Street) in Whitechapel, and was that of Elizabeth Stride (aka. Long Liz). She was found by Louis Diemschutz, just outside of WWC, a men's club. It has been believed that the attack on Elizabeth may have been interrupted as she (and



Nichols) were the only victims without mutilations or missing organs. Liz instead featured a solid blade slice to her throat, cutting the windpipe completely in two.

Just a quarter of a mile away, forty-five minutes after the discovery of Elizabeth Stride, the body of Catherine Eddowes was discovered on Mile Square in London. When found, her clothes were pulled up above her waist. Her throat was cut and her bowels protruding, stomach ripped up and lying in a pool of blood (several signatures of the Ripper). Eddowes was the only victim killed inside the city of London. By this point the murders were of an unbelievable frustration to the police, who concluded that the death of Catherine Eddowes must have taken place (from beginning to end) in the span of fifteen minutes. Moroso, one Constable Alfred Lord discovered a piece of a bloody apron lying in the entrance to a building in Whitechapel's Goulston Street. Above the apron, written on the archway in chalk was: "The Jewes are the men That Will not be Blamed For nothing." The apron piece belonged to the victim from Mile Square, and the writing was believed to be the killer's. It is also noted that Eddowes was missing a part of her earlobe, which eluded back to a piece of the letter received by the Central News Office, foreshadowing part of the crime that had yet to be committed.

The Monday morning following the murders, Scotland Yard finally received the beforementioned letter (addressed to the Central News Office). Postmarked October 1st, written in the same handwriting as the original letter, a new note was delivered from the Ripper. This time, discussing the double-murder, and utilizing a now-famous phrase: "saucy Jackys work." A third letter was sent on October 16 to George Lusk, the head of the Mile End Vigilance Committee. Sent with part of a human kidney, the accompanying letter was determined not to have been written by the author of the two earlier letters, signed Jack the Ripper, but the note did bare one of the most popular quotes relating to the Ripper murders: "From hell" ... claiming the kidney to be part of a past victim (and explaining the missing portion of the body part to have been eaten), added a new element to this already frustrating case.

A week after the double-murder, the streets of Whitechapel were essentially deserted when night broke, with prostitutes leaving the streets, and taking up shelter with family and friends. Commerce and trade went downhill as fear struck the city.

After a six-week period of inactivity, Jack the Ripper struck again, this time murdering a twenty-five year-old by the name of Mary Jane Kelly (aka: Ginger).



Killed on November 9th, Kelly's mutilated corpse was discovered laying on a bed in her room located at 13 Miller's Court, off Dorset Street in Spitalfields. Found by Thomas Bowyer (a money collector, sent to visit Ms. Kelly) when he was not answered at the door. Reaching inside through a broken window and pulling back a curtain, he witnessed a scene that literally caused him to run away to his boss, John McCarthy. Mary's body was mutilated beyond belief, sprawled out on a bed. The carotid artery in her throat had been severed, and was the cause of her death. Her breasts were cut off, her arms mutilated, and face carved in vicious fashion. The address of this murder was enhanced by the victim's sole missing organ: her heart. Many other internal organs were removed from Kelly, but were left in her room. This was the last and most horrendous of the Ripper killings.

The police received numerous letters and pegged several suspects while working on the Ripper case. Most of the suspects were interrogated; however, the police never had a lead suspect, or any evidence to link anyone to the crime. After Kelly's death, the murders appeared to stop, and fear of the Ripper dried up. There were other murders that followed the death of Mary Jane Kelly, but were never considered by investigating officers to be the work of the Ripper. One Alice McKenzie was found dead in July of 1889, having her carotid artery severed, but the wounds to her body were different from the Ripper's past victims. Two years later, on February of 1891, a prostitute named Frances Coles was found with her throat cut. Her death was instead linked to another suspect. Four other victims were investigated by the London police as possible victims of Jack the Ripper. Only three of those names were actually killed in 1888 (the year of the before-mentioned five-known-killings of the Ripper). Outside of the eleven known investigated murders, there were nearly a dozen other crimes that took place between the years of 1887 and 1891 that some would have you believe were caused by that of the Ripper. These cases were never properly discussed among Scotland Yard as being linked, and thus removed from any real connection to the murder-spree. The files kept by the Metropolitan police show that the investigation, which began in 1888 eventually came to include eleven various murders beginning in April 1888, until February 13, 1891, dubbed by the police the "Whitechapel Murders." Between the eleven murders investigated by the police, five are agreed upon by most authorities to have been the work of a single serial killer - the five victims of Jack the Ripper.

The Jack the Ripper file was officially closed in 1892. 📁

THE RIPPER IN CINEMA

Jack the Ripper, as mentioned earlier in this article, has been the basis of more written work than any other killer in history. While this fact impresses those who are fans of literature, movie buffs may find it hard to believe that he is NOT the basis of more film work than any other killer. Jack the Ripper is portrayed in a variety of fashions found within several works in cinema. Often relegated to waxwork films, the Ripper comes to life via animated wax figures that terrorize the screen. This was a feature-film and television gimmick used in such movies as *Waxworks*, *Terror in the Wax Museum*, *Waxwork II* and in the television series *The Twilight Zone* (episode "The New Exhibit").

Outside of inanimate recreations of the London killer, Jack the Ripper has also enjoyed a healthy amount of screen time opposite Sherlock Holmes, in various adaptations of Marie Belloc Lowndes' *The Lodger*, and he appeared as a character in the HG Wells book, *Time After Time*, and later the film (played by David Warner).

In the 2001 feature, *From Hell* (starring Johnny Depp), the myths of Jack the Ripper is developed further, with the idea of conspiracy stemming from the British Royal Family. Based on a graphic novel by Alan Moore, the story involves a member of the Royal Family who wed and impregnates a young woman commoner. After a forced separation and abortion (to hide the potentially hazardous truth), the

young woman's prostitute friends are murdered, one by one, in savage acts to erase all of the known accomplices and witnesses to the couple's relationship. Excruciating attention to detail was paid within the book (and film), as many facts from the actual murders were twisted slightly for the benefit of this story, and has actually led to a hefty amount of fans who believe the facts in this story to be true!

Other than the all-too-serious *From Hell*, the Ripper has shown some fun on the screen, having appeared in comedic parts for both *Monkeybone* and *Shanghai Knights*. With the exception of the Alan Moore-inspired feature, a truly terrifying version of the Ripper has not appeared on screen in nearly twenty years.

1924 - <i>Waxworks</i>	1971 - <i>Jack the Ripper</i> (Paul Naschy)	1985 - <i>The Ripper</i>
1927 - <i>Hutchinson's The Lodger</i>	1971 - <i>Jack the Ripper</i> (short)	1989 - <i>Jack's Back</i>
1928 - <i>Pendula's Blue</i>	1973 - <i>Jack the Ripper</i> (TV Mini-Series)	1989 - <i>Jack the Ripper</i> (Michael Caine)
1944 - <i>The Lodger</i>	1973 - <i>Terror in the Wax Museum</i>	1989 - <i>Eden of Sanity</i>
1963 - <i>Man in the Attic</i>	1976 - <i>Jack the Ripper</i> (Klaus Kinski)	1992 - <i>Waxwork II</i>
1958 - <i>Jack the Ripper</i> (TV)	1979 - <i>Monk by Deceit</i>	2001 - <i>Monkeybone</i>
1963 - <i>The Twilight Zone</i> (TV "The New Exhibit")	1979 - <i>Time After Time</i>	2001 - <i>From Hell</i>
1965 - <i>A Study in Terror</i>		2003 - <i>Shanghai Knights</i>
1971 - <i>Hands of the Ripper</i>		

FULCI LIVES:

A HISTORY OF ITALIAN HORROR

By Kenneth Nelson, with Michael Barone

In honor of the DVD release of *PAURA: Lucio Fulci Remembered - Volume 1*, *HorrorHound* saw it fitting to take a look back at the career of one of the most infamous directors of all time. Few have had such a lasting effect on the horror genre as that of the late Italian director Lucio Fulci. Predominantly known for churning out gut-wrenching gore pics, Fulci's career actually covered a vast landscape of material outside of the horror genre. Despite this fact, it was his epic films of terror that earned him infamy the world over, even to this day.

Born in the summer of 1927, Fulci grew up in The Eternal City of Rome having stints as both an art critic, and medical student as a young man. Following World War II, Fulci decided to seek out a career in film and enrolled in a renowned Italian film school: Centro Sperimentale Cinematografica. Upon graduating, he immediately entered the film industry, though it would be quite some time until he tried his hand at horror.

When viewed in its entirety, Lucio Fulci's career in film is exceptionally bipolar. Nearly the first twenty years of his career were spent working on films outside of the horror genre in various capacities. He started off as an assistant second unit director, eventually working his way up to gigs as a screenwriter, producer, and assistant director. Fulci directed his first feature film in 1959, the comedy *i ladri* (aka. *The Thieves*). Though the film was not very successful, Fulci managed to find a particular niche in comedy, and directed numerous films from this genre throughout the decade that followed.

Hints of horror began to spring up in Fulci's 1959 historical costume drama, *Beatrice Cenci* (aka. *The Conspiracy of Torture*). The film was a pet project for Fulci, and had elements of murder and torture sprinkled throughout, but nothing to the severe degree that lay ahead of him.

Based on a true story, the film concerns the noble Cenci family, and is set in 16th century Italy. Told almost entirely in flashback, the audience discovers that Beatrice (Adrienne LaRussa) and her corrupt and powerful father, Francesco (Georges Wilson), have a twisted relationship. Francesco imprisons Beatrice in the basement of the family's castle for a year. After her release, attempts at incest are made upon her by Francesco. Fed-up with her disobedient father's way, Beatrice plots a murderous revenge that ends with her stabbing Francesco, and attempting to cover up the homicide as an accident. As the story returns to its present-day, we see that Beatrice and her accomplices have been implicated in the murder of Francesco,

despite their work to make the death look like an accident. The film ends on a somber tone with Beatrice, along with her family and lover, being led into the courtyard for their execution. Many of those who worked with Fulci say that *Beatrice Cenci* was his favorite film, though to this day it has yet to be released on DVD in the United States.

Fulci's first horror films arguably came in the form of the popular giallo. The giallo was a genre of film prevalent in Italy from the mid-1960s until the early eighties, described in the simplest of terms as excessively violent and hyper sexual, whodunit murder mysteries. A *Lizard in a Woman's Skin*, Fulci's psychedelic giallo entry was released in 1971. The film includes an outstandingly grotesque scene featuring several dogs whose chests are clamped open. Appearing to be some weird medical experiment gone awry, the sequence is all the more chilling given the hearts of the dogs are still beating (check out page 52 for more information on this and other films mentioned throughout). The scene caused a great deal of controversy in Italy upon its release as many thought the scene was shot

using real dogs. Rumors have circulated for years that Fulci was arrested on charges of animal cruelty, however this is not the case. In fact, Fulci never even appeared in court. *Lizard's* producer, Edmondo Amati, and special effects maestro Carlos Rambaldi both testified in court several times. Upon proving their innocence, by producing the prop mechanical dogs in court, all charges were dropped.

The following year Fulci released his next giallo, *Don't Torture a Duckling*. Set in the Italian countryside, and revolving around a series of murders committed against young boys, the story is anything but your typical giallo. The film's undisputed highlight comes in a vicious attack on an alleged witch, Mariara (Florinda Bolkan), by a gang of male townies.

"*Duckling*" stirred up quite a bit of controversy due to its perverted betrayal of the Catholic Church, and was never given a theatrical release in the United States. In fact, Fulci challenged the beliefs of Catholicism in many of his films, although speculation is still rampant about how much of this was intentional versus mere coincidence. The intense themes of *Duckling* were far ahead of its time, and it is no surprise that the film remains one of the highlights of Fulci's catalog with fans and critics alike.

Horror finally penetrated Fulci's films with the release of *Sette nate in nero* (aka. *The Psychic*; 1977), which revolves around a woman who has a vision about a skeleton buried within the walls of her home. The woman attempts to learn whose body it was condemned behind the concrete. The movie wasn't high on the scares, but that was only the precursor, as



Don't Torture a Duckling



Figure 1



true horror was about to hit theaters, and cement the director as a bona-fide genre heavy hitter.

Fulci's first full blown horror film came in 1979 in the form of *Zombi 2* (aka, *Zombië*). The film's title was a classic case of exploitation marketing. George Romero's *Dawn of the Dead* was released in Italy under the name of *Zombi* by producer Dario Argento. *Zombi 2* actually held no relation to the Romero film whatsoever, and in fact, the script was actually completed prior to *Dawn of the Dead*'s theatrical release in Italy.

Nevertheless, pawing the film off as a sequel via its title, ensured audiences would give Fulci's gore-soaked opus a better chance at finding an audience. It was also a great method to secure sales in foreign markets: the film was profitable before it was ever released to theaters.

Lucio Fulci's *Zombie* follows the adventure of a young woman, Anne Bowles (Tisa Farrow), attempting to find her missing father after his boat mysteriously shows up in the New York Harbor without anyone on board... alive that's a couple of officers from the Coast Guard are attacked by a bulbous zombie when investigating the boat, but the situation is obviously being kept quiet by the detectives assigned to the case. This introduces the audience to journalist Peter West, portrayed by Ian McCulloch, who senses something fishy about the events which took place on the boat. Based on a hunch from a letter written by Anne's father (which

is found on the boat), Anne and Peter team-up to travel to the island of Matul in order to get to the bottom of the mystery. The pair manages to hitch a boat ride with another couple, and eventually the group makes their way to the cursed island.

Upon arrival, the group meets Dr. Menard (Richard Johnson) who explains that a mysterious disease has overcome the island, the same disease to which Anne's father had succumbed to, bringing the dead back to life despite all rational scientific explanation. Zombie mayhem obviously ensues in some of the most brilliant and disturbing special effects sequences ever seen on film, primarily the result of

effects master and frequent Fuici collaborator, Giannetto De Rossi. The film manages to end on a rather bleak and memorable shot of the zombie plague descending upon New York City, with

a flock of the undead trekking across the Brooklyn Bridge, leading some to even interpret *Zombi 2* as a pseudo-sequel to Romero's *Dawn of the Dead*. *Zombi 2* also holds the distinct pleasure of being the only memorable zombie film released throughout the "Romero years" that focused wholly on voodooism as the cause of the undead plague.

Following the immense financial success of *Zombi 2*, Fulci

was in demand as a horror director. His next stab at genre filmmaking resulted in what is one of the greatest exercises in gore ever put to screen: *The City of the Living Dead* (aka, *Gates of Hell*). In the film, one of the seven gates of Hell (a premise Fulci would later re-visit in *The Beyond*) is opened after a priest (Fabrizio Jovine) hangs himself on cemetery grounds in the small village town of Dunwich. Strange occurrences and disappearances follow suit as All

Salin's Day approaches, the day on which the living dead are said to descend through the gate to walk the earth. As a reporter (the late Christopher George) and a psychic (Catriana MacColl) team up to try and prevent the impending doom that awaits, hell literally breaks loose in classic Fuat fashion.

ion. *City of the Living Dead's* irrational plot is truly secondary as the screen oozes in dense hellish atmosphere, traversing from one classic moment in gore to the next. Another standout feature as well as common element of most of Fulci's material, was the technical expertise exhibited behind the camera despite the reportedly rushed production. According to those who worked with the legend, Fulci was by all accounts a craftsman and technical genius. This was rarely as apparent as during the maggot storm scene towards the finale of *City of the Living Dead*. It may not be the goriest moment in the film, but it is certainly one of the most memorable. Like *Zombi 2* before it, "*City*" was dis-

tributed all over the world and continued Fulci's box office success.

Next up for Fulci was an Edgar Allen Poe adaptation, *The Black Cat*, released in 1981. This new film effort was more than a bit subdued compared to his previous work. However, the director soon came back to all his blood-soaked glory with his next feature.

What many consider Lucio Fulci's ultimate masterpiece was released in 1981: *The Beyond* (aka, *Seven Doors of Death*) in which he unleashes the wrath of yet another opened gate to Hell. This time it's located in the basement of an abandoned hotel in New Orleans. The hotel has been left to Liza Merrill (Cathrina MacColl) as part of an inheritance, so she relocates from New York in an



Lizard in a
Woman's Skin



Zombie



Zombie

FULCI LIVES



corate anyone without the wherewithal to "aim for the head." Although the film lacks some narrative thrust and has quite a few lapses in logic (there are no basements in New Orleans!), the atmosphere throughout the film more than makes up for any minor pitfalls in the story. Fabio Frizzi provided a dazzling, terrifying score that further set the nightmarish tone that the film exudes so well. The movie also sports one of the most unsettling and bleak endings in horror history as Liza and the doctor find themselves entrenched in "the beyond," an endless sea of sand, dust and corpses. American audiences did not get to see *The Beyond* in all of its unrated, undead glory until the late 1990s when Quentin Tarantino's Rolling Thunder Pictures learned up with Grindhouse Releasing to restore and distribute the film on the midnight movie circuit. Prior to this, the film had only circulated through America in heavily edited form under the alternate title *Seven Doors of Death*.

As a follow-up to *The Beyond*, Fulci churned out another supernatural gore-fest that has since gone on to be heralded as one of the classics of his resume. Shot under the working title of *Freudstein, The House by the Cemetery* was also unleashed on audiences in 1981, and deals with the Boyle family moving from New

York to the titular house in New England. Unbeknownst to the family, evil dwells in the cellar as former resident of the house, Dr. Freudstein, has managed to stay alive in a monstrous form by feeding off the cells of the living. Equal parts ghost story and monster movie, the gore is toned down a bit from Fulci's last effort, but still plentiful enough to please fans of the grotesque. The big reveal of Dr. Freudstein does not come until the final act, and one can't help but wish it had come sooner, as the character carries an iconic look, and fascinates in the short time given on screen. Who wouldn't want to see more of a ghoul that

attempt to fix-up the building. Bizarre accidents halt the renovation process as Liza mysteriously encounters a blind girl named Emily who warns her to leave the hotel. Liza also befriends a doctor, John McCabe (David Warbeck), who aids her in unraveling the mystery behind the aptly named *Seven Doors Hotel*. A string of brilliant murder-set-pieces ensue as the gate to Hell is finally opened, including a facial spider attack for the ages, and an acid face melt. In typical Fulci fashion, the dead rise to evi-

cozes maggots, and makes the noises of a young child to attract would-be victims into his macabre experiments?

Fulci's busy schedule did not slow down as 1982 saw the release of what may be his most controversial film, *The New York Ripper*. The plot of the film follows the exploits of a misogynistic serial killer (dubbed the "New York Ripper") with the voice of a duck who is brutally carving up young women on the streets of New York City. The film was a complete departure from the fantastic nightmares Fulci had been churning out at that time and, as a result, the film was harshly criticized for its intersex, bleak realism. In fact, after being screened by British censors, "Ripper" was banned in the UK during the infamous video nasties fiasco, and all prints of the film were ordered out of the country. The accusations of Fulci himself being a misogynist would forever stay following *Ripper*. By all accounts, Fulci not only tore open

The Beyond



women on screen, but tore into them on the set as well. Fulci had a string of three marriages throughout his life, beginning with his first wife who committed suicide. This tragedy conveniently took place in the late '60s, around the same time Fulci began to tackle darker material for the first time in his career.

The legend even mimicked his first wife's death in one of his later films, 1988's *Touch of Death*. One can only imagine that such personal strife would bleed over into the director's material. The claims of misogyny were likely perpetuated by Fulci's rough behavior on set. The director would supposedly belittle his actors while throwing raving fits if he didn't get what he wanted. Lucio was an extremely cultured man and required respect, although earning it was no easy task, as he forced his actors and actresses to really prove themselves before he



The Gates of Hell



House by the Cemetery

Did You Know? Fulci had five films banned in the UK during the video nasties era: *Zombi 2*, *The Beyond*, *The New York Ripper*, *City of the Living Dead* and *House by the Cemetery*.

would regard them in the same light that he demanded. Some claim that Fulci would assign pet names to some of the cast and crew in order to taunt them — was he treating them a particular way to draw out a performance or was he just a bitter, twisted man? Perhaps it was a little bit of both, but either way most horror fans will agree that Fulci was a mad genius of a director.

After *The New York Ripper*, Fulci quickly reverted back to the supernatural with 1982's *Manhattan Baby*. The film was a drop in quality from Fulci's other horror output at that time, involving strange occurrences surrounding an Egyptian amulet that is brought back to New York City by a young girl (Ingittia Boccoli) and her archaeologist father (the late Christopher Connelly).

Fulci attempted to break away from horror for his next two features, *Conquest and Rome, 2072 A.D.* *The New Gladiators*, but the director had little success as he was now pigeonholed as a genre specialist. He soon returned to horror with 1984's *Murderlock*, and continued to work predominantly within the confines of the horror genre for the remainder of his career. Fans were still paying attention to Fulci's work, however, the director was no longer pumping out classics as he was in the early '80s. His triumphant return to glory was to be in the form of a sequel to *Zombi 2*, aptly titled *Zombi 3*.

Although the film bears his name to this day, very little of *Zombi 3* is actually Lucio Fulci's film, a fact that any true Fulci fan can clearly discern by watching the dreadful, dull picture that was eventually released in 1988. As the '80s drew on, Fulci had slipped into poorer health as his diabetes began to take hold of him. Taken ill, Lucio had to abandon the project during production, and the film was left in the hands

of the hack exploitation director Bruno Mattei and writer Claudio Fragasso who revelled in creating such stinkers as *Rats*, *Night of Terror* and *Women's Prison Massacre*. To this day, rumors still circulate about how much of the footage on-screen was actually shot by Fulci, with different sources claiming anywhere from five minutes to about half of the film. Regardless, the movie was still unfortunately marketed



The only licensed products based off Fulci's work come in the form of comic books (see right) and these two Halliween masks produced by Bump in the Night Studios



Plotted by the Mystery



as Fulci in order to secure distribution and sales.

As the '80s gave way to the '90s, Fulci continued to work in horror, despite a lack of anything particularly memorable to show for it. Prior to the release of *Zombi 3*, in 1987 he released *Aenigma*, a low-budget Came send-up involving a young comatose girl seeking revenge against those who hospitalized her. A year later both *Touch of Death* (a serial killer/cannibal film) and *Ghost of Sodom* (a ghost-Nazi film) hit the screen. After the *Zombi 3* incident, Fulci released the last notable films in his career, *Cat in the Brain* (aka: *Nightmare Concert*) and *Demonia* in 1990. His last feature film, *Door to Silence*, was released in 1991; however, he was pegged to co-direct a pseudo-remake of *Mystery of the Wax*

Museum, titled *Wax Mask*, with Euro-directing legend, Dario Argento, who wanted to lend a hand to the ailing director, in hopes of releasing one more gem in Fulci's catalog. Unfortunately, the film never made it before the lens prior to Lucio's death. The legendary director succumbed to diabetes on March 13, 1998, reportedly sneaking a big piece of chocolate cake just prior to bed without taking his insulin. Some have speculated it was a suicide, others just a mere accident, but everyone can agree it was a tremendous loss. Out of respect, Fulci's funeral was paid for by Argento himself, and *Wax Mask* was produced just one year later.

With the advent of DVD, Lucio Fulci's films have continued to reach new audiences, and create fans the world over. On February 26th, 2008, producer Mike Baronas released to DVD, *PAURA: Lucio Fulci Remembered - Volume 1*. The documentary is a massive look at Fulci's life, and clocks in at over four hours. It is compiled of nearly ninety interviews with cast, crew, and contemporaries of the director, all of who are responding to the question: "What is your fondest memory of Lucio?"

What ensues is a plethora of tales about who the legend was, both on and off the set. Just some of the interviews on the DVD include Catrona MacCol, Gianetto De Rossi, Ruggero Deodato, Michele Soavi, Lamberto Bava as well as countless others. Lucio Fulci was the epitome of a despised icon, and with this memorial DVD fans will hopefully get quite a bit more insight as to who the legend was behind the camera. 🍷

in COMICS

Fulci's films have never lented themselves to merchandising; however, over the past ten years there have been three comic titles, released through various publishers, based on his classics. *Blackest Heart* (Mystic released in 1998, Lucio Fulci's *Manhattan Baby*, *The Beyond*, in graphic novel form. This comic is limited to a run of 600, but surprisingly is still available through Rotten Codon. A soundtrack CD to the film is attached to the back cover of the comic as well in 2000 *Blackest Heart* also released *Zombi*, which also comes with a CD. This is a much harder find, and goes for an average of \$70 on the secondary market (if found). *Gates of Hell* was later released by X Machina Comics, and is also a very rare find. Follow-up issues are not known to exist.





Gore Hound

FULCI: GOD OF GORE

Our Top 10 Greatest Gore Shots
by Aaron Crowell

Herschell Gordon Lewis may have brought gore to cinema, but Lucio Fulci perfected it. The auteur never let fans of the grotesque down, inventing some of the most transcendent moments in splatter film history. His devotion to disgust often outweighed his interest in narrative coherency and continuity. Typical of Italian horror directors of the time, Fulci's films boasted over the top set-pieces (shark vs zombie, savage beatings, melting flesh, and of course, several scenes of cop-to-assault) pushing the boundaries of horror, and raising the bar for both violence and gore. His horror films may have appeared as elaborate excuses to make viewers squirm in their seats with explicative exuberance, but his grasp on technique in the hor-

ror genre is unquestionable. Worship or loathe him, no other director has given gore so much love and screen time. I say this because I believe that for Fulci, gore was his biggest star (and he knew it), continually earning him international attention and admiration, enduring with future generations of grue-seeking Horrorhounds. It's high time for us to honor the maestro in these humble pages with our top ten countdown of Fulci's greatest gore moments. While GoreHounds around the world will never cease to mourn his passing, we can all still proudly proclaim our dedication to his memory with the immortal words: "Fulci Lives!"



10: To Mrs. Hammond's Horror

A *Leser* in a Woman's Skin was Lucio Fulci's first real foray into horror. A nightmarish psychodrama/animal-themed giallo (thriller) surrounding Carol Hammond (Florinda Bolkin), as a prominent politician's daughter who is haunted by sexual nightmares forcing her to seek psychiatric therapy. In a dream-like scenario, Carol is relaxing outside of a clinic when she is startled, and chased deep into the facility by a mysterious figure. She finds herself in a room filled with dissected dogs still alive, each with its exposed heart and guts pulsating away. Animal protection agencies denounced the set designer's work, leading to a lawsuit. It seems that the dogs proved so real that several crew members were hauled into court to disprove this accusation. Carlo Rambaldi, a special effects director, saved Fulci from a two-year prison sentence when he presented the fake dog props in court to a seemingly unconvinced judiciary. This marked the first time in film history an effects artist had to prove his gory work was not real in a court of law.



6: Maciara's Brutal Beheading

Florinda Bolkin returns as the mentally disturbed witch Maciara in *Don't Torture a Duckling* (1972). In a remote village, the bodies of young boys are discovered and deemed the work of a deranged killer. Maciara is placed under suspicion and later apprehended by the police, confessing to the murders that she reveals was exacted through a pin-filled voodoo doll and curse. Since Maciara's motive differs from the killer's, she is set free. It turns out that the towns people aren't so convinced of her innocence though, as a group of men follow her into a cemetery to exact their own brand of brutal vigilante justice. Unfortunately for the witch, this dispatchment involves rusty chains and splintered lengths of timber used to beat her. The cruelty is made even more audacious with an artistic decision to add a car radio emitting popular music from above. The first two tracks of modern music complement the extreme tension as the beating elevates, only with the mood changing to the sentimental soft sound of Italian singer Ornella Vanoni for the sympathetic conclusion. Maciara is left in the cemetery to suffer a slow painful death alone, only to crawl to the edge of a road where her plight goes ignored by passing family-filled cars.



in grotesque fashion and steal their cash. He then disposes of their bodies by eating them, sometimes feeding portions to animals. After several failed attempts to poison a (judicious) woman named Margie MacDonald (Sacha Maria Danew) with a nightcap, Lester grabs a thick wooden stick, and commences to violently beat her. The scene is even more horrific since the jagged stick rips Margie's blackened eyeball free of its bleeding socket. Just when you think the worst is over for poor Margie, she springs to her feet for a feeble escape attempt through the kitchen. Here Lester gives her a swift right cross, grabbing his hapless victim, and shoving her head-first into an oven. The audience then, from an unique vantage point, witness Ms. MacDonald's battered face melting from the intense heat of the oven.



9: Scherino's Last Stand

Fulci brings his flare for gratuitous violence to the crime thriller genre with his 1980 gangster piece. Contraband! A slight detour from horror doesn't seem to distract the maestro here where he heaps on the beatings and bloodshed aplenty. A testament to the fact that horror fans are not the only ones who enjoy a gory good time. In this mafia mystery, Luca (Fabio Testi), his brother (Ennio Mastro), and fellow boss buddies are being offed one by one. Luca must be careful who he trusts, as he attempts to survive this gang war of epic proportions, shaking the very core of Naples, Italy. When Luca and rival mob boss Scherino (Fernando Murlo) visit the home of Luigi Perante (Savino Marconi), they are ambushed. Only after Scherino is gunned down does he get a little perfunctory payback on Luigi before catching a barrage of machinegun bullets to the face. This gangster gore great is sadly often overlooked!



7: Dissecting Daniela Doria

A year after directing the horror cult classic *House By The Cemetery*, Fulci sets up shop in the 'Big Apple' for a brief return to the crime thriller genre with his 'Hitchockian' creation, *The New York Ripper*. Mutilated women's bodies began popping up from Staten Island to Times Square, subsequently leading to a city-wide hunt for the sadistic butcher. After lauding the NYPD detectives with phone-in threats, delivered in a Donald Duck-sounding voice, the maniac finally makes his way to the lead detective's prostitute girlfriend Kitty's apartment (played by Daniela Doria). After discovering the detective and leading him to an isolated phone booth, the killer calls the detective who frantically answers. He hears the duck-voiced ripper informing him of the imminent demise of his sexy blonde concubine. The scenes that follow are among the most sexually obscene, with the killer brandishing a razor blade, and proceeding to slowly dissect and mutilate the bound, nude, screaming call girl. First making an incision down the abdominal area, then moving on, slong her perky nipple in half, and finishing her off with an assault-to-the-eye, sure to induce a good wine thanks to SPFX artist Franco Di Girolamo. When the detective finally arrives, we catch a final glimpse of Kitty's fully dissected corpse, sprawled out on her breeding blue bed. Easily one of the most grisly murder sequences ever perpetrated to celluloid.

6: Margie MacDonald, Bludgeoned and Baked

Before Lucio Fulci became a horror director, he was known for his commercial comedies. He also worked in just about every genre of film, even creating some along the way. So, it is not a huge surprise that his horror film, *Touch of Death*, should be a black comedy. The movie centers around subdued psychopath Lester Pearson (played by Brett Halsey). Lester is a compulsive gambler who can't catch a break, leading him to wine and dine lonely, wealthy (and horny) females he meets through the local newspaper's lonely hearts ads, only to slay them in grotesque fashion and steal their cash. He then disposes of their bodies by eating them, sometimes feeding portions to animals. After several failed attempts to poison a (judicious) woman named Margie MacDonald (Sacha Maria Danew) with a nightcap, Lester grabs a thick wooden stick, and commences to violently beat her. The scene is even more horrific since the jagged stick rips Margie's blackened eyeball free of its bleeding socket. Just when you think the worst is over for poor Margie, she springs to her feet for a feeble escape attempt through the kitchen. Here Lester gives her a swift right cross, grabbing his hapless victim, and shoving her head-first into an oven. The audience then, from an unique vantage point, witness Ms. MacDonald's battered face melting from the intense heat of the oven.



5: Undead Jugular Chomp

A year after George A. Romero's gorefest *Dawn of the Dead* became the talk of "Hollywood," heads quickly bowed in honor of a new undead masterpiece (and its director) titled simply *Zombie* (AKA, *Zombi 2*). A scientist's delirious boat turns up adrift in New York City waters, where investigating officers are dispatched, and attacked by a bloated undead zombie slowpoke. The missing scientist's daughter, Ann Bowles (Tia Farrow), is questioned, informing authorities she hasn't heard from her father for some time. He has been on an island in the Caribbean helping a doctor, David Menard (Richard Johnson), discover a cure for an unique disease. With the aid of a journalist (in search of his next big story), an ethnologist and a free spirited sexy diver, Susan (Aurelia Gay), the group set out for a remote region of the Antilles Islands in search of Ann's father. As the group search the island, they find far more than they bargained for. A cast of the most putrid decomposed dead crawl from their graves, including one featured on the film's US poster, now an enduring horror icon: it is the worm-eyed zombie of which we speak (played by Ottaviano Dell'Aquila) that delivers a sudden chomp to the jugular of Susan in this sickening scene. The zombie's snarled teeth tears her throat wide open as the gore discharges like lava from a volcanic opening. You can even hear the horrific sound as Susan gaggles and chokes on her own blood as she falls to the earth.



3: Jill's Facial Fulmination

Heralded as Fulci's ultimate masterpiece, *The Beyond* (AKA, *Seven Doors of Death*) can only be described as a nightmare committed to celluloid. Fulci himself has described his work as a pitiless (logical film) empty serving as a succession of dark images. Seven dreaded gateways to hell are concealed in seven cursed places. From the day the gates of Hell are opened, the dead will walk the earth. When Liza Merini (Cinzia MacColl) intends and plans to fix-up an old Victorian hotel in Louisiana built atop one of these satanic gateways, she is besieged by a host of gruesome and supernatural events. Fatal accidents begin to occur as a plumber breaks through a wall in the basement that leads straight to Hell (Merini!). As the dead at the hospital morgue begin to twitch, another nasty scene plays out involving a little girl named Jill (Mara Pia Marsala) and her mother. The local doctor, John McCabe (David Warbeck), beholds Liza as the couple are sucked into "the beyond." In the finale, they must face off against a horde of nasty zombies while protecting Jill. Without warning, the youngster spontaneously attacks Liza, as the good doctor spends no time blowing a hole through the child's head with his pistol. The scene is truly momentous, and unlike previous (and current) exploding head scenes where the craniums are detonated by the blasts, we are left with the hollowed-out shell of Jill's fulminated skull with the lower half of the girl's face intact, teeth still gritting from the impact.

1: Olga's Forced Ocular Obstruction

Luck is a word commonly used to describe the making of the film *Zombie* by those involved. This holds especially true for make-up artist Giannetto De Rossi and his crew (Mauro Tassi and Rosario Prestipino) when creating the most suspenseful, yet repulsively extraordinary, sequence out of any Fulci film. Of course, I speak of the famous splinter-to-the-eye of Paolo Merardi (Olga Karlatos). When a zombie intruder's arm smashes through her door, pulling the beauty slowly into a huge shard of wood, screams ensue. Luckily for De Rossi and crew because they faced several problems when time arose to shoot the scene. First, the replacement head that was to be doubled for Karlatos was not ready. Rather than panic, De Rossi moved forward with the shoot as if nothing was wrong. Using the only part of the head that was ready (a piece the size of a human hand complete with the fake eye, which had not died either), Fulci was forced to narrow and shoot an extreme close-up of the scene, once he understood what De Rossi was attempting. Since the eye had still not dried completely, the splinter enters pushing out the goo, then entering the entire socket, followed by the skull, then at the last second, De Rossi (moving the head during the scene with his arm) twisted it toward the camera showing us the audience the white of the eye, as the splinter breaks free, now embedded in Paolo's eye socket. The seconds leading up to the puncture of the eyeball, hold the viewer in a complete entranced state of terror. As the sequence comes to a close, we are left with the chilling image of Karlatos's horrified face. The scene was filmed in one take, and is the best example of improvisational special effects magic and luck found in horror cinema today. Lucky for De Rossi, Fulci and us Gorehounds, since the scene could not have been reproduced any better even if executed properly. In closing, have fun show your family, show your friends, hell show everyone, and watch them squirm! 🍷



4: Disciplinary Cranial Carnage

When a priest, Father William Thomas (Fabrizio Jovine), hangs himself from a church cemetery tree in the small New England town of Dunwich, a gate to Hell is opened and the dead begin to rise. *The Gates of Hell* (AKA, *City of the Living Dead*) is a tense, nightmare follow-up film to *Zombie* with a stronger sense of horror ubiquity. Giovanni Lombardo Radice (aka John Morghen) plays the misunderstood Bob, a sexually frustrated drug addict. When Bob creeps through a garage window to smoke a little weed with a young girl, her father bails in, catching them red handed. The father (Venantino Venantino) decides to teach Bob a fatal lesson about what happens when you mess with his daughter, aka power tools. Possibly influenced by the ubiquitous horror present in Dunwich, he slams Bob's head down upon a backward table facing a mammoth horizontal drill. As the drill starts spinning and moving forward toward the boy's temple, the tension and suspense mounts with each passing second. The spinning drill finally makes cranial contact! As the blood begins to flow, we see the drill bit run completely through, breasting its way through brain matter and out the other side of Bob's skull. The camera then pans out, allowing us but just a glimpse of the aftermath.



2: Rose's Revolting Regurgitation

Sometimes in cinema, directors are blessed with actors and actresses willing to do anything required of them, going that extra mile to bring something very special to their role, and hopefully to the film. No other actor in cinematic history has ever been asked to do what Daniela Dons did for director Lucio Fulci in *City of the Living Dead*. Rose Kelvin (Dons) and her boyfriend Tommy Fischer (Michele Savio) are getting trucky in their parked vehicle when Father William Thomas's haunting image appears before them. As Rose makes prolonged eye contact with the deceased dorgy man, she begins to cry tears of blood, followed by foaming at the mouth. What comes next, in this viewer's opinion, is the most original and disgusting sequence in splatter film history. Rose begins to regurgitate her entire intestinal tract and stomach... everything comes up in full gory glory, and that is not the most disgusting part of the scene. It is the fact surrounding this transcendental moment that truly turns the stomach. It seems Dons was asked, or told, to actually swallow the tripe of a freshly-slaughtered lamb (due to it drying up in a matter of minutes becoming unusable) which she did, and vomited it up for the scene on cue. The following close-up shots of the bowels rushing out from the mouth were achieved by using a doll containing a pump. Always a fun scene to shoot first take!



FANTASM

This issue's Collectors Spotlight was submitted by Nicole Mikuzis. The collection shown here is of her boyfriend, Bob Richards. Bob's collection consists of over 1,500 moves, hundreds of magazines dating back from 1961 (including issues from MAD magazine, Rue Morgue, and Famous Monsters), and his collection of movie memorabilia including tons of toys and posters that he has collected over the years!

Thanks for e-mailing us these great pics Nicole!



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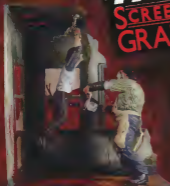
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NEXT ISSUE

HorrorHound goes 3D next issue as we take a historic look at one of the oldest and coolest movie gimmicks to be used by the horror industry - from *The Creature From the Black Lagoon* and *House of Wax* to *The Nightmare Before Christmas* and *Night of the Living Dead 3D*. We present a guide to the films, how they changed the industry, and a special look at the poster art that captivated audiences all around the world!

Our latest HorrorHound retrospective feature comes from the pen of David Kosanik, as he takes a look at the history of the film series known as *The Blob*. The original Steve McQueen sci-fi horror romp turns fifty this year while at the same time, *Shawnee Smith's* 1988 remake celebrates its twentieth anniversary! We showcase a host of rare memorabilia surrounding the series as well as facts and information that you may or may not have known (including a new interview with star *Shawnee Smith*!).

Movie news this issue centers around the latest *Clive Barker* tale to become immortalized on celluloid, *Midnight Meat Train*, plus the latest from *M. Night Shyamalan's* *The Happening*. The New York Toy Fair will have come and gone - and if this issue was any indicator - 2008 will be a BIG year for the horror collectible industry! Expect big announcements from *Sideshow Collectibles*, *Mezco Toys*, *NECA* and *Amok Time*! Plus, a special look at the New Line Cinema House of Horrors by *Gentle Giant* (including an all-new interview with one of the men behind the company's push into horror - *Dev Gilmore*!).

All this, plus a special three-page HorrorHound comic by artist *Jeff Rabner* starring "The HorrorHound" himself, DVD News (including the latest on the TV hit known as *Deadly*), *Roadkill* reports from *Monster Mania X* and *HorrorHound Weekend*, a "nightmarish" edition of *Horror's Hallowed Grounds*, *GoreHound*, *HorrorHound Hall of Fame*, comic book news and more - all in our eleventh issue of *HorrorHound Magazine*! Available this April (and now bi-monthly)!

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HORROR Convention Calendar

World Horror Convention

March 27 thru 30th, 2008
Salt Lake City, UT
Radisson Hotel Downtown
(featuring *Dennis Etchison*, *John Jude Palancra* and more)

HorrorHound Weekend

March 28 thru 30th, 2008
Indianapolis, IN
The Marriott East
(featuring a *Heather* reunion, *Lance Henriksen*, *Chris Sarandon*, *Ruggiero* *Deadbeat* and more)

Cinema Wasteland

April 4 thru 6th, 2008
Cleveland, OH
Holiday Inn Select
(featuring a *Spider Baby* Reunion, *Dyanne Thorne* (*Lisa*), *Catrina McCall* and many more)

New York Comic-Con

April 18 thru 20th, 2008
New York, NY
Jacob Javits Center
(www.nycccon.com)

Chiller Theatre Expo

May 2 thru 4th, 2008
Parsippany, NJ
Hilton Parsippany
(www.chillertheatre.com)

Crypticon Seattle

May 23 thru 25th, 2008
Seattle, WA
DoubleTree, Seattle Airport
(featuring *Shawnee Smith*, *Barbara Crampton* and many more)

Eerie Frequency Movie Expo

June 6 thru 8th, 2008
Warren, OH
Comfort Inn
(featuring *Fred Williamson*, *Margo Kidder*, *Priscilla Barnes*, *Sonny Landham* and many more)

HorrorHound Weekend

June 20 thru 22th, 2008
Pittsburgh, PA
The Pittsburgh Expomart
(featuring *John Landis*, *Griffin Dunne*, *Dafanano Dell'Acqua* and many more)

Flashback Weekend

June 27 thru 29th, 2008
Chicago, IL
Crown Plaza Chicago O' Hare
(featuring *George Romero*, a *Night of the Living Dead* reunion, *Halloween babysitters* and more)

WonderFest

July 19 thru 20th, 2008
Louisville, KY
The Executive West
(www.wonderfest.com)

HorrorHound Weekend

August 29 thru 31st, 2008
Indianapolis, IN
The Marriott East
(featuring *Joe Dante*, *Dick Miller* and many more)

*see next issue for more show listings

Have a show you would like to promote in the pages of *HorrorHound*? Don't wait! Contact us via e-mail at mail@horrorhound.com

HORRORHOUND

FANS CHOICE

HALL OF FAME

FRIGHT NIGHT

by Nathan Hanneman

Following in the paw prints of such amazing cinematic masterpieces as *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, *The Howling*, *Night of the Living Dead*, *Shaun of the Dead*, *The Lost Boys*, *The Thing*, *Nightbreed* and *The Wolf Man* - the *HorrorHound* Hall of Fame can now add Tom Holland's '80s vampire classic *Fright Night* to its ranks!

In the last issue of *HorrorHound*, we asked you, the readers, to choose the next inductee into our continuing tribute to classic horrors. The *HorrorHound* Hall of Fame. Just like last year (where fans decided to bestow Quentin Tarantino/Robert Rodriguez's *From Dusk Till Dawn* with this honor), we gave the option of voting for one of three titles. This year the choice was between *Beetlejuice*, *Fright Night* and *Phantom of the Paradise*. In a surprise move - *Fright Night* edged out the arguably more popular (and fan friendly) title of *Beetlejuice* to become this issue's fan pick! Thank you *HorrorHounds*!

Released in 1985, this Tom Holland production presented the what-if scenario that many horror fans have dreamt up, having been brought up on Bela Lugosi and Christopher Lee fanged fright fests: What if a vampire moved in next door? William Ragsdale, a virtual newcomer to cinema, was cast as Charlie Brewster - the kid with the neighborly nightmares. In his small circle of friends are girlfriend, Amy Peterson (played by a pre-*Married With Children*'s Amanda Bearse) and best bud, "Evil Ed" Thompson (Stephen Geoffreys). When Charlie, who is completely in love with horror films, starts to suspect his new neighbor to be a vampire, he only has his friends to go to for support. As with any horror film, his friends dismiss Charlie's claims, and to make matters worse - the neighbor has become suspicious of Charlie's interest in his night-time endeavors. The neighbor, of course, is a vampire (wouldn't you know it) and soon begins to make Charlie's life a living hell. Played by Chris Sarandon (an Oscar nominated actor, for his role in 1975's *Dog Day Afternoon*), the vampire, Jerry Dandrige, makes nice with Charlie's mom, and eventually turns good-guy "Evil Ed" into a vampire, with the same fate set for girlfriend, Amy. With no place left to turn, Charlie begs for help from the only expert he knows - a vampire-slaying television horror host by



world as Marie D'Arcy in *Married with Children*, William Ragsdale became the lead in a short-lived, but memorable television series known as *Herman's Head*, and "Evil Ed" himself, Stephen Geoffreys, cemented his name as a bonafide horror star with a role in Robert Englund's 1978-*EVIL*, just four years later. Even the film's director became known as a "Master of Horror" with his other film jobs ranging from *Child's Play* to Stephen King's *Thinner*. Just three years later, Ragsdale and McDowell returned to their vampire-killer roles for a barely-interesting sequel that revolves around a revenge-seeking Regine Dandrige (sister to the first film's antagonist) and her motley crew of monsters. The film was a virtual flop. Aside from the sequel, the story of Brewster and Vincent continued in comic book form, for some time.

A recent *Monster Mania* horror convention reunited Sarandon, Bearse and Geoffreys last year in an ode to the memory and success of this twenty-plus year old film, with the majority of the cast (and director, Holland) now touring the convention circuit to meet and greet with fans over their love of this vampire tale. *Fright Night* proved to everyone that there are indeed, good reasons to be afraid of the dark - and better reasons to be a horror fan! 🦋



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